RESILIO ACCESS
Country Report
Serbia

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1. Introduction

The state of democracy and the rule of law in Serbia has been shaped and reshaped by decades-long political turbulences. Even now, seemingly new political grievances sit atop historically unresolved legacies. The early 1990s saw the start of an uncertain and crisis-ridden period brought on by the breakup of Yugoslavia and the consolidation of power under Slobodan Milošević and the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS). Milošević's regime utilised repressive measures, the weakening of institutions and the media and the incitement of social divisions and violence to strengthen its grip on power and extinguish democratic potential.

By the turn of the millennium, the prevalence of repression and institutional erosion had exhausted any remnants of the regime's legitimacy. Milošević's authoritarian regime was overthrown in the 5 October Revolution, a mass civic upheaval that erupted after Milošević's initial refusal to recognise the will of the electorate (as expressed in the first round of the September 2000 presidential elections). It removed Milošević from power, weakened the SPS and brought about a new status quo. The establishment of democratic rule under the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) and Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić was a formative phase in Serbia's democratic journey, largely grounded in pro-European values. That phase was abruptly cut short by Đinđić's assassination in 2003. This was generally regarded as a politically motivated killing aimed at halting his reforms, exposing how organised crime networks and elements of the state security services had become intertwined, operating with mutual protection rather than in opposition to one another.

In the period that followed, Serbia's political system underwent several other formative shifts. Montenegro's declaration of independence in 2006 dissolved the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. This prompted the adoption of a new Serbian Constitution later that year during the presidency of Boris Tadić of the Democratic Party (DS). Tensions over Kosovo came to a head in 2008 with Kosovo unilaterally declaring independence, a declaration never officially recognised by Belgrade. Not long after, Serbia formalised its bid for EU membership in 2009, and in 2014 the accession process advanced with the formal launch of political-level negotiations.

The period from 2014 to 2024 was defined almost entirely by the rule of the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), whose leadership is itself heir to the ultra-nationalist, far-right Serbian Radical Party (SRS) which gained notoriety in the 1990s and early 2000s. Under the SNS, the more gradual hollowing out of institutions developed into something closer to outright capture. Snap elections were one of the tools SNS used to maintain this hold. The party's decade in power saw five parliamentary elections – of which four were snap elections used to consolidate power while the

opposition largely remained fragmented. In 2020 the opposition boycotted the parliamentary elections, leaving them outside Parliament entirely. 2023 saw the return of some dynamism to parliamentary politics, with the opposition returning to Parliament in its biggest capacity in years (the main opposition force winning 23.66 per cent of the votes).

During the SNS's time in power, Serbia's democratic potential steadily deteriorated. When the former prime minister Aleksandar Vučić became president in 2017, Serbia had already become an electoral autocracy.[1] This decline also relates to how citizens have come to see institutions – the formal resource the rule of law should rest on. In 2024, only one third of respondents rated the independence of courts and judges as fairly or very good,[2] echoing findings that political pressure on the judiciary and prosecution service remain high. Public confidence in representative institutions has followed a similar pattern. In 2022, nearly half of citizens expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of the National Assembly,[3] while an even larger share reported dissatisfaction with local self-government. These developments point to declining trust in Serbia's core democratic institutions.

By 2026 – and after almost two years of mass student- and citizen-led protests against corruption following the collapse of a canopy at a newly renovated train station in Novi Sad – the deterioration of the rule of law had developed into open repression of fundamental freedoms.[4] This was reflected in presidential pardons granted to individuals who had carried out physical attacks on peaceful demonstrators, politically motivated prosecutions for allegedly undermining the constitutional order and even instances of political exile.[5] Academic freedoms were put under pressure. Election observers increasingly pointed out that political violence had begun to overshadow the question of whether elections can be considered free and fair. The politicisation of top judicial and prosecutorial appointments had become largely unquestioned, compounded by the outright disregard or simple dysfunction of key oversight bodies.

Serbian society is so deeply polarised today that those advocating for democratic freedoms and accountability (be they protesters, activists, civil society or just government critics) are routinely

[1] V-Dem Institute, *Democracy Report 2023: Defiance in the Face of Autocratization* (University of Gothenburg, 2023); Freedom House, *Nations in Transit 2024: Serbia* (2024).

[2] European Commission, *2024 Rule of Law Report: Country Chapter on the Rule of Law Situation in Serbia*, Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2024) 831 final, 24 July 2024.

[3] Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Učešće građana u demokratskim procesima u Srbiji 2022* (2023).

[4] V-Dem Institute, *Democracy Report 2026: Unraveling the Democratic Era?* (University of Gothenburg, 2026).

[5] Beta Briefing, "Serbian President Pardons Driver Who Severely Injured Student Protester," August 4, 2025.

branded by pro-government media and top government officials as 'colour revolutionists' attempting a violent overthrow of the Constitution. Against this backdrop, the space available to human-rights defenders narrows. Democratic backsliding can no longer be described as the gradual weakening of institutions falling victim to politicisation, but rather as a systematic effort to eliminate the space for critical debate and accountability.

2. Analysis of the country case along the RESILIO-ACCESS model

2.1. The most important primary resilience resource: Equality before the law

Although Serbia lags significantly behind the average of EU members in the RESILIO-ACCESS model across all other resources of primary resilience, including constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, regulatory enforcement and the judiciary budget, its position regarding equal protection under the law is much closer to the EU average, particularly among the lowest-performing member states. In the Hayekian understanding, equality before the law can be treated as an ideal that directs the development of a society without ever fully determining its ultimate destination.[6] It offers up ground rather than a fixed goal.

Serbia's modern attempt to lay this ground can be traced to the adoption of a new constitution in 2006, in which equality before the law was enshrined. In retrospect, a constitution should serve not only as an orientation point for all citizens, regardless of public office, but also as a central reference point against which subsequent governments can be measured. Article 21 of the 2006 Constitution stipulates that all citizens are equal before the Constitution and the law, that everyone has the right to equal legal protection without discrimination and that any direct or indirect discrimination on any grounds (including race, sex, national origin, religion, political belief, property status or disability) is prohibited.[7] On paper, this constitutional guarantee anchors Serbia's rule-of-law resilience.

To support the legal architecture underpinning equality under the law, the Law on Prevention of Discrimination was adopted. This established the office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality.[8] Equality before the law and anti-discrimination are also preserved in other laws, including those regulating healthcare, education and other areas. The Law on Prevention of Discrimination,

[6] Friedrich A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (University of Chicago Press, 1960).

[7] Republic of Serbia, *Constitution of the Republic of Serbia*, Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, no. 98/2006, art. 21.

[8] Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, *Vodič kroz Zakon o zabrani diskriminacije*.

amended in 2021, obliges courts and other public authorities to protect citizens from all forms of discrimination.

While the law's implementation has brought positive changes in the protection of citizens from discrimination and sparked public dialogue on equality and inclusion, persistent cases of discrimination and inconsistent handling by the courts show that deeper work is still needed to address the root causes of inequality.[9] The combined mandate of the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality is sufficient in principle for these institutions to make a meaningful difference in protecting citizens' rights, preventing discrimination and improving the conduct of public administration,[10] provided they are properly used. This would strengthen equality before the law as a primary resilience source. Yet this foundation has proven vulnerable to the very stressors it was meant to withstand.

Other primary resources

When it comes to the other primary resilience resources, constraints on government powers, arguably one of the most consequential for rule-of-law resilience, has dramatically declined. On the sub-factor measuring whether government officials are sanctioned for misconduct, Serbia ranks among the three lowest-ranked countries globally and well below both the regional and global average.[11] The pattern is illustrated by several cases from the 2014-2024 period, such as that of Aleksandar Vulin who served successively as Minister of Defence, Minister of Interior, and Director of the Security Information Agency. In 2023 Vulin was sanctioned by the United States for corrupt dealings that undermined democracy and facilitated malign Russian activities in Serbia and the region. Despite this, he was reinstated in government as Deputy Prime Minister in May 2024, facing no domestic sanction or investigation whatsoever.[12]

2.2. The most important subsidiary resilience resources: Democratic participation and civil society

Democratic participation and civil society are addressed together as the most important subsidiary resilience sources, though each is considered in turn below. These two resources have become closely intertwined in Serbia over the latter part of the last decade. Given the narrowing of

[9]Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, *Ljudska prava u Srbiji 2024* (2025).

[10]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Uloga i položaj Zaštitnika građana i Poverenika za zaštitu ravnopravnosti* (2019).

[11]World Justice Project, *Rule of Law Index*.

[12] U.S. Department of the Treasury, "Treasury Sanctions Serbian Officials for Corruption," press release, May 24, 2023; *NIN*, "Vulin i Popović dobili prazne funkcije u vladi."

institutional channels, democratic participation (especially through taking part in social movements) and civil society have provided platforms for those driving democratisation and advocating for the rule of law in Serbia.

Lipsky's notion of protest as a political resource of the powerless[13] bodes well in this context. The work being done by social movements – very much like the 2024 student protesters centring their demands on rule-of-law prerequisites – takes place outside institutions and outside conventionally conceived channels of political power. In this sense, the rule of law is not faultlessly enshrined and protected; it is itself a frontline in the struggle to preserve it.

Democratic participation

Over several cycles since 2014, Serbian citizens have repeatedly turned to civic mobilisation as a vehicle for expressing their political voice. This shift is also indicative of a broader lack of trust in institutions,[14] particularly among those inclined to be more critical of the government. These citizens have redirected their civic energy toward protest, grassroots organising and civic initiatives. Recently, these movements have spread beyond the capital and other large cities to encompass towns and cities across the country.

Several other waves of mobilisation over the period reflect this pattern. The 2021–2022 protests against lithium mining, triggered by Rio Tinto's Jadar project in West Serbia, brought together environmental activists, local communities and opposition-aligned groups in a sustained campaign that ultimately contributed to the government's decision to revoke the project's licences (albeit temporarily).[15] Protests following two mass shootings in May 2023 marked a further escalation, shifting the demands towards a broader call for institutional accountability encompassing media regulation and the resignation of senior government officials tied to the educational and security structures.[16] The 'Serbia Against Violence' protest movement organised dozens of large-scale, peaceful civic protests throughout 2023, sustaining the highest levels of support since the fall of Milošević.[17] This movement formalised itself as an opposition coalition under the same name, becoming the largest opposition force in the National Assembly after the December 2023 elections.

[13] Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," *American Political Science Review* 62, no. 4 (1968): 1144–58.

[14] Irena Fiket, Gazela Pudar Draško, and Milan Urošević, "Anti-Politics as Culture of Rejection: The Case of Serbia," *Patterns of Prejudice* 57, no. 4/5 (2022): 279–96.

[15] BBC News, "Serbia Revokes Rio Tinto Lithium Mine Permits Following Protests," January 20, 2022.

[16] Al Jazeera, "After Two Mass Shootings, Serbians Rally against Violence," May 8, 2023.

[17] Archive of Public Gatherings, "Serbia: After 2020," accessed 2026, https://javniskupovi.org/index.php/category/politicki/srbija-politicki/srbija-politicki-posle2020/.

This does not seek to dismiss the centrality that elections should occupy as a dominant channel of formal democratic expression, but it reflects that elections have been extensively marred by irregularities that seriously undermine the freedom and fairness of the electoral process.

Electoral democracy in Serbia has registered a dramatic decline, reflecting a decade of deteriorating electoral conditions, political pressures on voters (discussed in the following section), unrestrained campaign spending and unequal media representation of political actors. Between 2014 and 2024, one of the dominant examples of the erosion of this domain of electoral democracy were the 2023 elections, where the local elections for Belgrade, engineered to such an extent that they did not reflect the free and fair will of Belgrade's residents. The elections were influenced through various types of manipulation aimed at ensuring that voters who would not ordinarily be able to vote in Belgrade were able to do so.[18] By the time of the 2025 and 2026 elections, physical attacks on domestic independent observers, journalists and citizens had intensified to an unprecedented scale, overshadowing deliberation of whether an election can be considered free or fair.[19]

Civil society

Civil society in Serbia functions as a critical bridge between extra-institutional mobilisation (such as grassroots initiatives and social movements) and the institutions that such mobilisation ultimately targets. Serbian civil society spans a wide range of specialisations relevant to the rule of law, from human rights protection, election observation and environmental defence to surveillance and digital rights, protection of journalists and women's and minority rights.[20] Within the limits of their capacities and expertise, civil society works to strengthen rule-of-law resilience.

A notable example of this bridging function emerged directly out of the 2023 protests. In response to mass mobilisation, a platform against violence brought together twenty civil society organisations (CSOs) to translate the protest movement's broad demands into concrete, actionable proposals. The Network of Citizens' Associations, Journalists and Media against Violence proposed a specific sequence of steps towards fulfilling protesters' demands, including a roadmap for establishing an independent regulatory body for electronic media - lending its own institutional and media expertise to a demand that had originated in the street.[21] This is indicative of how Serbian

[18] Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), "CRTA's Final Election Observation Report: Defeat of the State and the Rule of Law," February 2024.

[19] Civil Rights Defenders, "Votes and Violence: Serbia's Local Elections Expose a System under Pressure," March 31, 2026.

[20] Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Human Rights and Democracy*, accessed 2026.

[21] Protiv nasilja, accessed 2026.

civil society has functioned as an avenue through which policy expertise, technical knowledge and advocacy are channelled back into the wider project of strengthening the rule of law.

Other subsidiary resources

While academic freedom is fairly well-positioned in the RESILIO-ACCESS set, this has changed in the latter part of the decade. There has been growing pressure and direct violations of university autonomy, particularly during and after the months-long student-led blockades of all faculties and universities following the Novi Sad canopy collapse. This period saw an unprecedented degree of direct violations of university autonomy, including a police raid on the Rectorate of the University of Belgrade in March 2026.[22] Materials from the investigation, including images taken during the raid, were subsequently disseminated through pro-government television channels – a testament to the extent of media instrumentalisation. This same dynamic extends to public deliberation more broadly, heavily constrained by the dominance of pro-government media in shaping public debate. A pattern has been established where all the most widely-consumed national media are subordinated to those in power, and opposition or critical voices are barely heard at all.

2.3. The most important stressors: Corruption, clientelism and media censorship

Corruption and clientelism

Rather than functioning as isolated instances of misconduct, clientelism in Serbia operates as an organised system of political control that reaches deep into the everyday lives of citizens, making it one of the central stressors. Since 2014, the mechanisms of corruption and clientelism have been steadily refined.

The structure of political pressure began to work with several interlocking goals: recruiting a critical mass of 'useful', unconditionally loyal party members who can help expand the electoral machinery; isolating, demoting or otherwise pressuring those who resist; sustaining an environment in which citizens' livelihoods are made to depend on the goodwill of individual power holders rather than on institutions (active deinstitutionalisation); and deterring noncompliance by making an example of those who face consequences.[23] Pressure then became characteristic of political life in Serbia – compelling participation in some political activities and discouraging participation in others.

[22]"Belgrade University Police Raid Triggers Protests and Clashes," *Balkan Insight*, April 1, 2026.

[23]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Politički pritisci na građane 2022* (2022).

Despite being channelled through corruption and clientelism, these pressures are political in nature. There is a clear imbalance in who these pressures are directed towards; public sector employees and citizens from the most vulnerable social groups are disproportionately exposed. In social welfare centres, this functions as an exchange of resources; votes, money (informal 'donation' schemes, rigged tenders, bonuses for politically active staff), information (such as lists of beneficiaries), jobs and positions and favours.[24] Beyond direct demands for political or professional favours, public sector workers also face an unwritten 'party omertà', an implicit ban on going against superiors or decisions, with boundaries that are rarely made explicit but are anticipated and internalised.

More than just a symptom of its weak rule of law, clientelism is one of Serbia's main stressors, systematically eroding equal treatment under the law - a primary resilience source, and the very principle it is meant to guarantee.

Media censorship

Media censorship is more intense than in other countries aspiring to EU accession, and is a second, closely related stressor. The ruling majority has dominated central news coverage for several years, amounting to more than 90 per cent of total airtime in informational shows across national television, including the public broadcaster.[25] The opposition has received only a fraction of this space. This imbalance is compounded by a double standard in tone. Coverage of the ruling majority is consistently neutral or positive; the opposition is overwhelmingly portrayed in a negative light. The disparity extends to the terms on which political actors are allowed to speak. The ruling majority is regularly granted an active role, addressing the public directly. The opposition is relegated to a passive role, mentioned only through others rather than speaking for itself.

This pattern of censorship also relates to Serbia's media ownership structure. A small number of owners (several with direct or familial ties to the ruling party or state institutions) control the outlets with the largest national reach.[26] One of the most-watched commercial channels - as well as dozens of cable channels, a national radio station and a web portal - is owned by an individual widely regarded as one of the ruling majority's most influential media allies. Beyond formal ownership

[24]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Mreža političkih pritisaka u centrima za socijalni rad* (2023).

[25]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Medijski monitoring političkog pluralizma, januar–decembar 2024* (2025).

[26]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), *Mapping the Media Landscape in Serbia, 2020-2021* (2023).

structures, non-transparent arrangements and undisclosed beneficial owners further obscure the true extent of political influence over the media.

Outlets critical of the government such as N1 and Nova S have been repeatedly denied national broadcasting frequencies, while frequencies have instead been granted to channels regarded as government-aligned.[27] Critical journalism is confined largely to cable and online platforms with a fraction of the reach, narrowing the space available for independent and investigative journalism and fact-checking. The media are prevented from playing the role they should – one in which unbiased reporting is far more firmly established, as in top-performing EU member states. Instead, these patterns replicate the same dependency seen in clientelist schemes.

Other stressors

Civil society repression is another key stressor. In November 2024, MPs from the ruling coalition's junior partner submitted a bill establishing a special register of 'agents of foreign influence', modelled closely on similar legislation in Russia, Georgia and Hungary.[28] Although Serbia's version was comparatively narrower, requiring at least 50 percent of an organisation's funding to originate from foreign sources before registration became mandatory, the manner in which it sets definitions of a 'foreign agent' and 'political activity' and its control mechanisms and sanctions made it a rudimentary version of the legislation put forth in Russia. Months later in 2025, police raided four organisations[29] on the orders of the Prosecutor's Office to investigate how the organisations had spent their USAID funding. This was on the basis of public statements by senior U.S. officials questioning the agency's use of funds worldwide. The raids added yet another layer to the government's tightening grip on civil society.

This stressor should be understood more broadly as the shrinking space for criticism. This extends beyond civil society organisations to a wider crackdown on human-rights defenders and democracy advocates, targeted both by censored media and state officials and affecting cultural associations, professional bodies, health-sector groups and organisations alike.

[27]Radio Slobodna Evropa, "Nacionalne frekvencije u Srbiji ponovo dobile TV Pink, Happy, Prva i B92," July 29, 2022.

[28]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), "'Foreign Agents' Law Initiative in Serbia: Comparative Overview with Legislation in Russia, Georgia, and Hungary," December 4, 2024.

[29]RFE/RL's Balkan Service, "Serbian Police Raids Target NGOs Supported by USAID," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, February 25, 2025.

3. The effect of the EU integration process

The start of the period analysed in the RESILIO-ACCESS dataset coincides with the formal opening of accession negotiations in January 2014. Twenty-two out of thirty-five chapters have been opened since then, but only two have been provisionally closed: Science and Research and Education and Culture. Neither relate to the rule of law.[30]

No new chapters have been opened since December 2021, and talks on several others are now blocked by member states over rule-of-law concerns. In July 2026, eight EU member states opposed the opening of Cluster 3,[31] citing continued shortcomings in the rule of law. They also cited Serbia's insufficient alignment with the Union's foreign and security policy, including its failure to join EU sanctions against Russia. This plays out in ways citizens encounter directly: the decision to grant a broadcasting licence to RT Balkan after the EU banned the channel following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in the uninterrupted operation of Russian businesses in the country and in Belgrade's refusal to end visa-free entry for Russian citizens – a step Montenegro has only just taken ahead of its own accession.

When it comes to the rule of law, Serbia failed to meet the two deadlines it had set for itself under the Fundamentals and Democracy area (December 2024 and December 2025). Only one of twenty-one planned steps in the Fundamentals and Rule of Law area was achieved.[32] On media independence, REM (the body meant to safeguard media pluralism) has repeatedly failed to constitute a full council and remains unable to function as an effective regulator. On electoral integrity, the voter register audit commission remains unable to do its job, having been denied the data access it needs under the very law that created it.

Although these shortcomings have long been the lived realities of Serbian citizens, they were largely absent from the EU's own formal assessments for years – despite rule-of-law conditionality being an integral driving force behind the accession process. It was only in its 2025 progress report that the European Commission for the first time used the designation "backsliding" to describe developments in Serbia.[33]

[30] Council of the European Union, "Serbia," accessed July 2026.

[31] European Western Balkans, "Eight EU Member States Oppose Opening of Cluster 3 for Serbia," July 8, 2026; *New Union Post*, "Opening Serbia's 3 Accession Chapters Divides EU Members," July 8, 2026.

[32] Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), "Reform Agenda Tracker," CRTA+, accessed July 2026.

[33] European Commission. *Serbia 2025 Report. Commission Staff Working Document SWD(2025) 755 final.* November 4, 2025. https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/6e68ce26-b95b-48e1-921a-c60c12da8f00_en?filename=serbia-report-2025.pdf.

The government has also not sufficiently prepared Serbian society for EU integration. As the majority of the most-widely available and consumed media are pro-government, they insist on a negative portrayal of the EU – with more than a third of all media manipulations classified as anti-EU.[34] This is not the only manifestation of the pattern; it is also reflected in media pieces citing officials where the president is predominantly negative towards the EU. By turning the public against the EU process, this media environment weakens the public support that rule-of-law reforms would otherwise need to survive.

4. Conclusion

Serbia's rule of law has shallow roots. Its democratic transformation was never completed and has been burdened by the decisions of those in power, who have found it useful to keep institutions weak or make them weaker whenever this has helped them stay in power. This has ensured that Serbia is far from possessing a truly strong or established tradition of rule of law. This clashes with the country's international obligations as well as the basic principles of the European project that Serbia says it wants to join.

The legal framework is strong on paper, as legislative reforms are closely linked with the EU accession process. However, the EU's oversight is focused less on the implementation of legislation, leading to a gap in its understanding of the level of protections of human rights and freedoms given by the adopted laws and judicial practice.

The other resilience sources covered in this report resemble attempts to tie Serbian society to the rule of law more substantively, but they remain vulnerable as they also operate against this background. On top of this fragile foundation sit the stressors. Corruption, clientelism and media censorship – all induced and endorsed – play into these pre-existing weaknesses.

None of this has taken the rule of law in Serbia to the point of ruin. Far more needs to be done to actually strengthen it, not just keep it from unravelling. For now, most of that work falls on citizens and rule-of-law advocates, not on the state institutions meant to carry it. At some point, though, that work has to move through institutional channels. Otherwise, it will only ever resist the abuse of institutions, not actually get rid of it.

[34]Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability (CRTA), "Media Monitoring Reveals a Systemic Rise in Anti-Western Narratives," 2026.

About the author

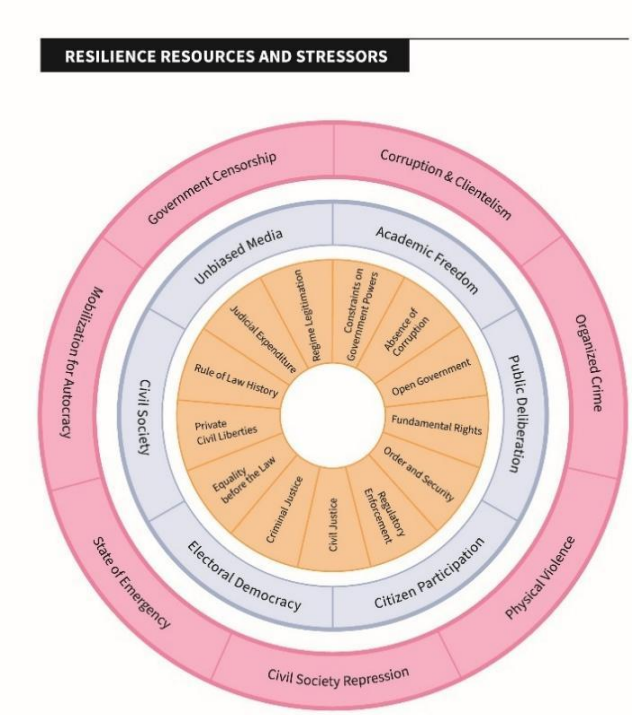
Tamara Šuša is a policy researcher at CRTA, a Serbian civil society organisation and democracy watchdog. A graduate of the European Institute at the London School of Economics and Political Science, her work focuses on democratisation, European integration, information integrity and strengthening democratic resilience in Serbia and across the Western Balkans.

About the project

RESILIO-ACCESS investigates the resilience of the rule of law in the current (potential) candidate countries for EU accession. The project explores how to measure resilience and how to assess the potential of the EU's enlargement policy toolbox to foster sustainable resilience in the region. Resilience is understood as the capacity of the rule of law to prevent, cope with or recover from hazardous events or incremental threats – without losing its core function, structure and purpose.

About the paper

This paper is part of the **RESILIO-ACCESS Country Reports**, a collection of compact analyses that assess the source of rule-of-law resilience in EU aspirant countries by using the analytical framework of the RESILIO-ACCESS model.



The RESILIO-ACCESS model is based on *three* dimensions: The system of the rule of law itself provides *primary resilience resources* such as an effective judicial system, the protection of fundamental rights and democratic elections. These resources are embedded into a social environment with *subsidiary resilience resources* such as civil society, academia and the media. However, these resources are constantly being challenged by *threats* such as autocracy, corruption, violence or censorship. The characteristics of each dimension, their interactions and their conditions of resilience resources determine the overall resilience capacity of the rule of law.

RESILIO-ACCESS is funded by Stiftung Mercator. The project is implemented by Institut für Europäische Politik in Berlin and Institute for Democracy 'Societas Civilis' in Skopje. For more information, visit the project website.