

Governance for societal resilience: Lessons from Ukraine

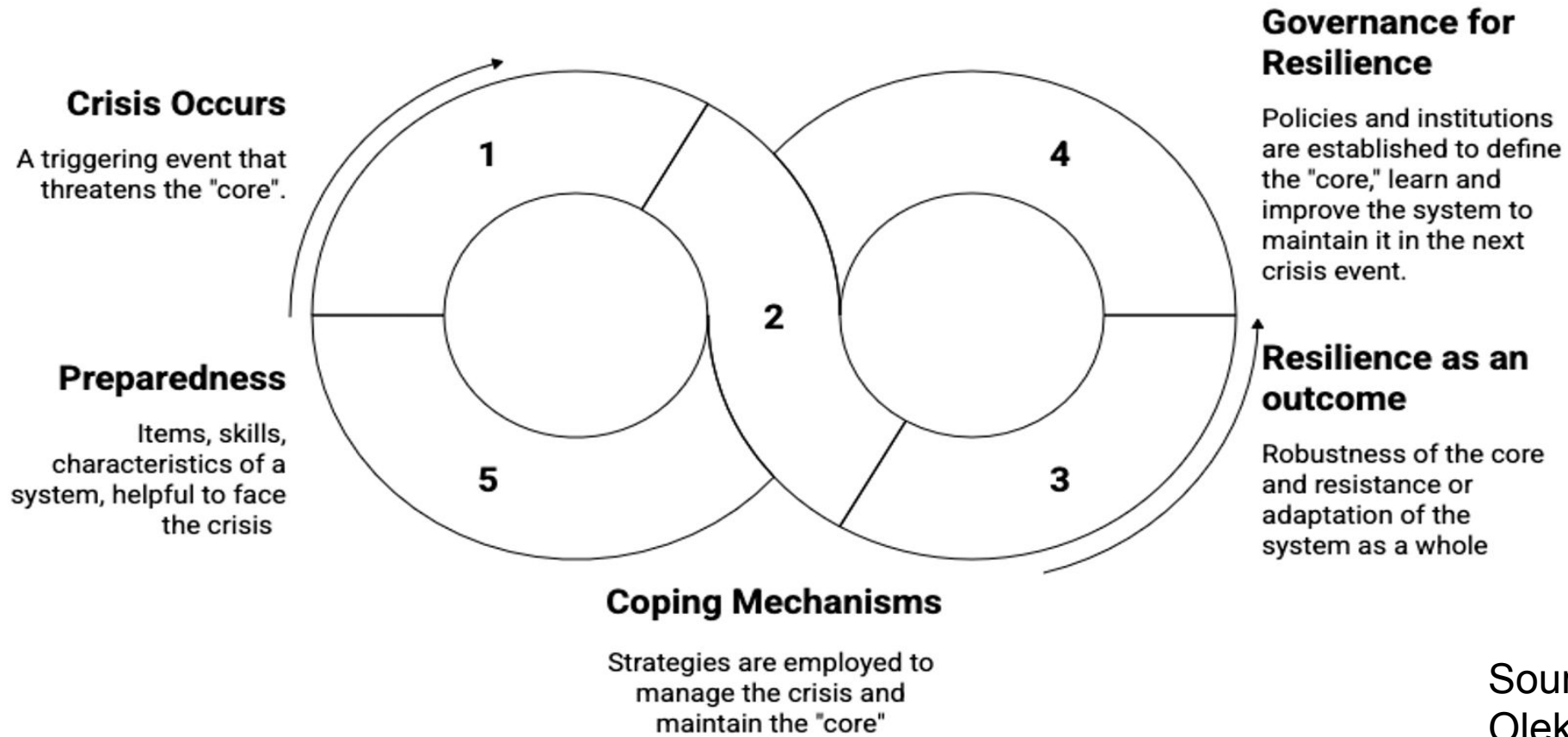
Oksana Huss, University Duisburg-Essen
Oleksandra Keudel, Kyiv School of Economics

Presented by Oleksandra Keudel within the CIVICA visit to Sciences Po
for

“Non-military mobilization: a pillar of societal resilience hiding in plain
sight”

3 December 2025

The Cycle of Societal Resilience



Source: Oksana Huss & Oleksandra Keudel

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Resilience: “The observable outcome (3) of **coping** (2) with a **crisis** (1) in such a way that a clearly defined **core** — the referent function, value, or institution considered worth protecting — remains intact (the “3C”), even as the system adapts or resists stress.”

Governance for resilience (4) can support society's **preparedness** (5) for a crisis, a contextual factor that may reinforce resilience as an outcome.

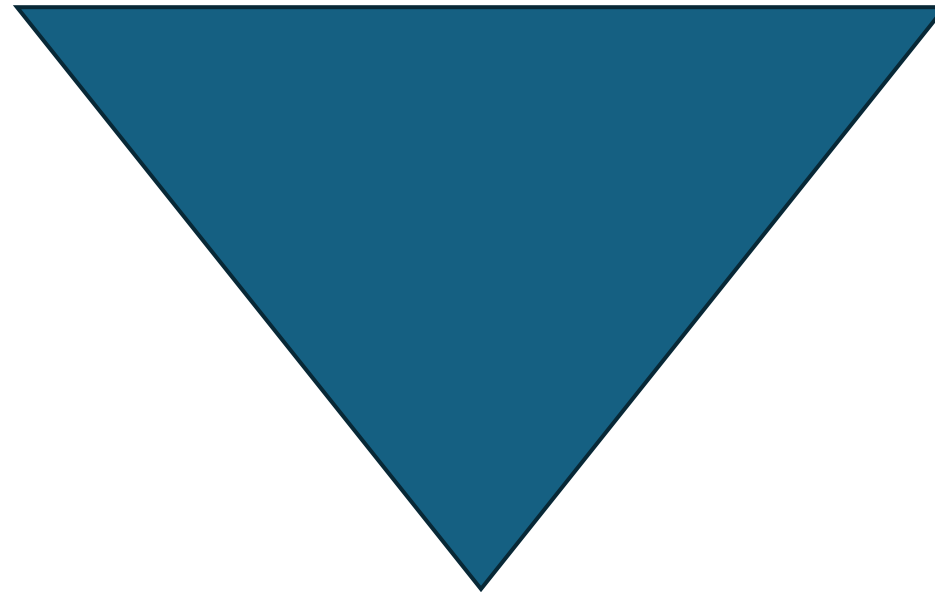
Governance for Societal Resilience (4)

Core

the referent function, public value, or institution to protect/preserve

Cohesion

networked interaction based on shared values & goals



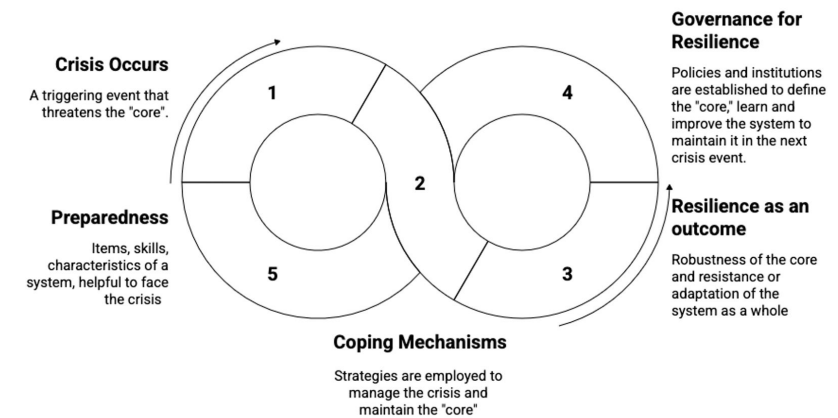
(getting ready for)

Coping

adaptation for mobilizing resources, knowledge & innovation towards preserving the core

Source: Oksana Huss & Oleksandra Keudel

The Cycle of Societal Resilience



The “Core” in the case of Ukraine

Function

- **What the core “does”**
 - Democratic functioning of institutions despite shock (Keudel and Huss 2025)
 - Continued provision of social services to the elderly (Lomonosova 2025)

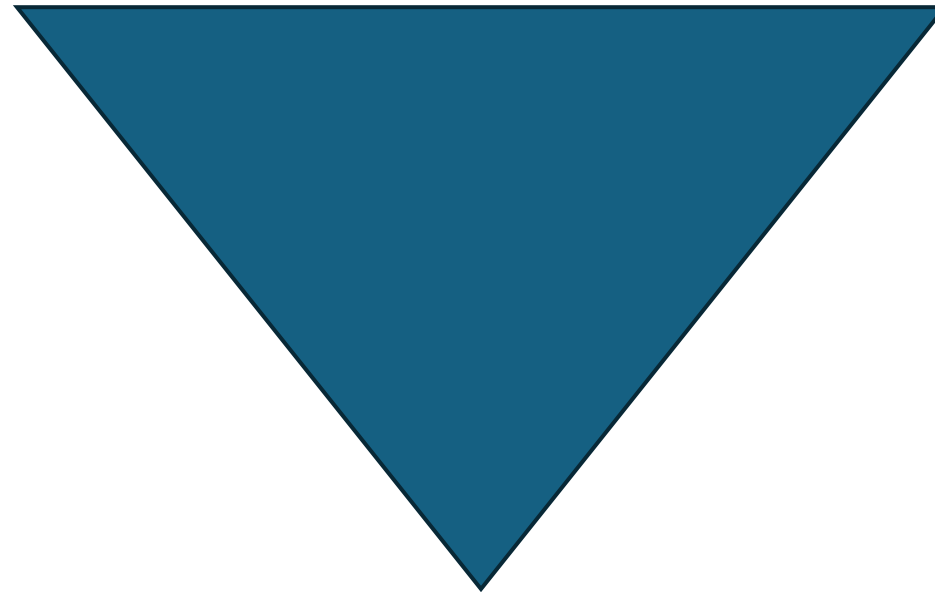
Characteristic

- **What the core “is”**
 - Values of democracy (WWS2021)
 - Ukrainian identity, deep historical roots, values of freedom & right to self-determination (Kutsenko 2025; Worschech 2022; Kulyk 2024).

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Cohesion

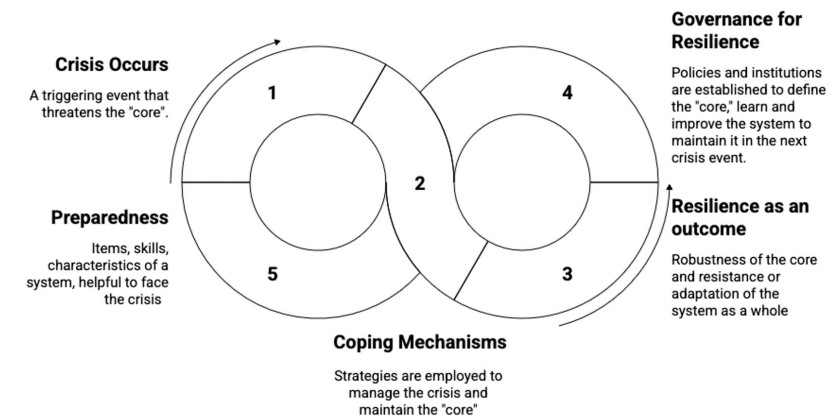
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Coping

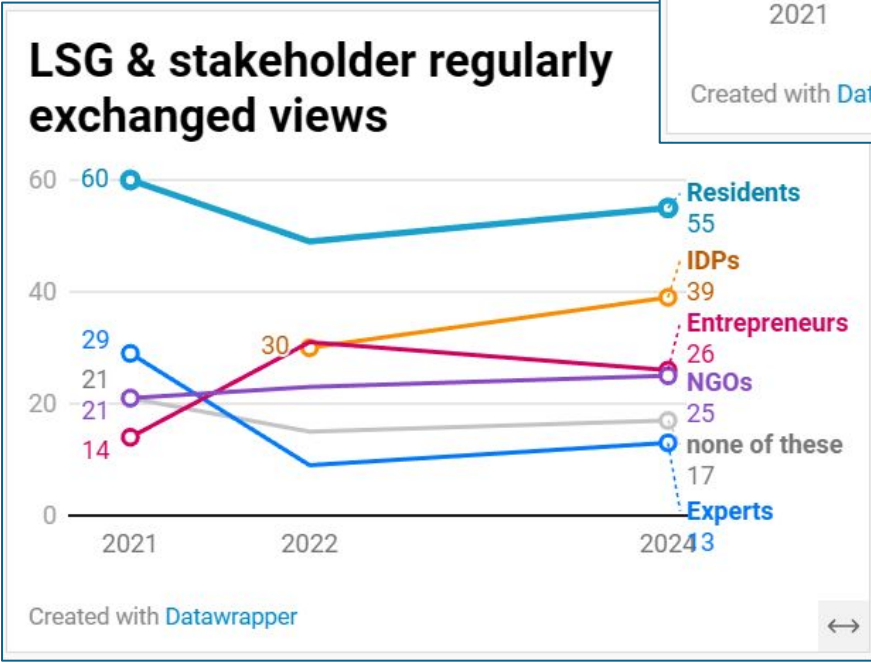
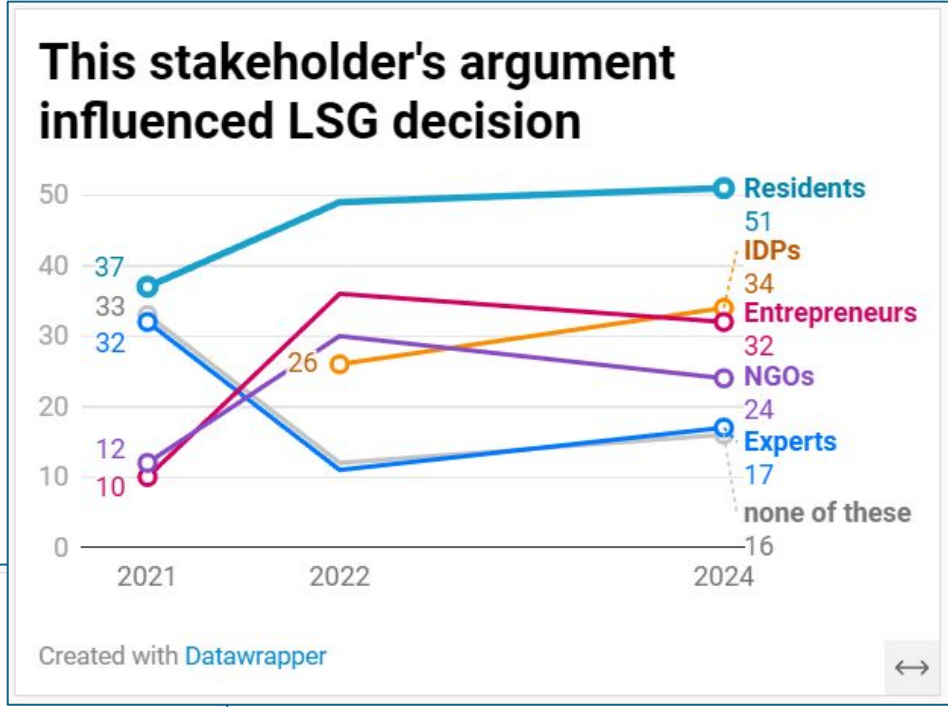
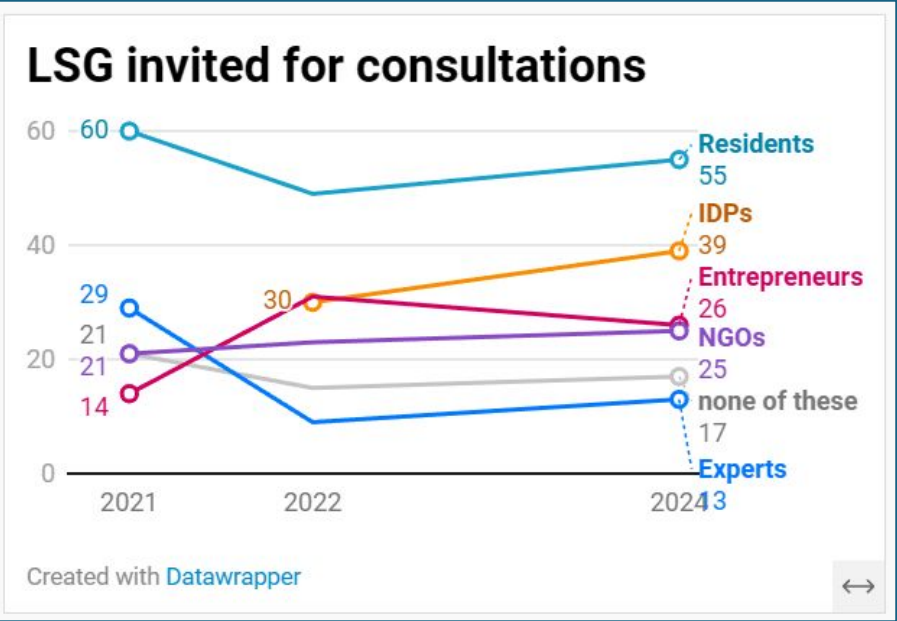
adaptation for mobilizing resources, knowledge & innovation towards preserving the core

The Cycle of Societal Resilience



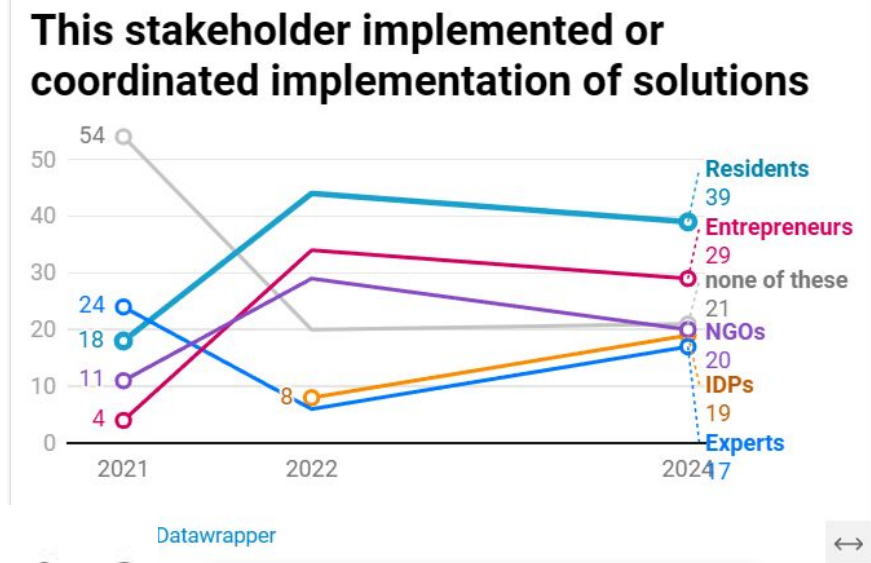
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The "Cohesion" & "Coping" in the case of Ukraine: Circulation of knowledge

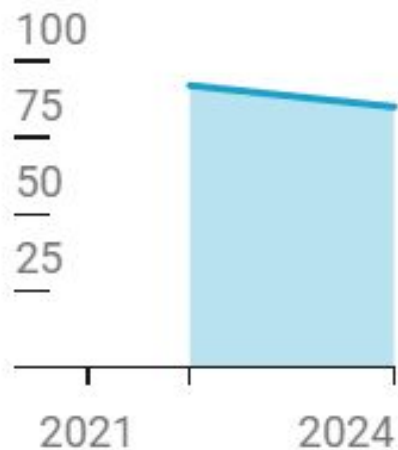


N = 127 (LSGs outside combat areas, on the territory of hostilities and liberated LSGs that engaged the public or business in critical issues over the past 12 months)

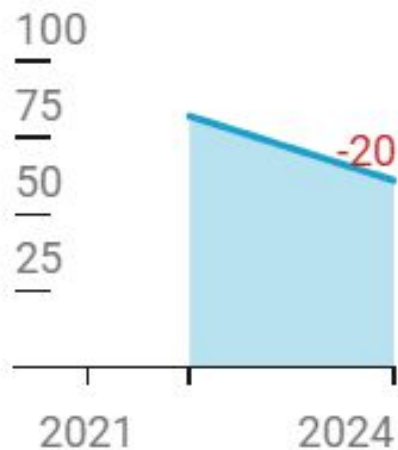
The “Cohesion” & “Coping” in the case of Ukraine: Resource mobilization & innovation



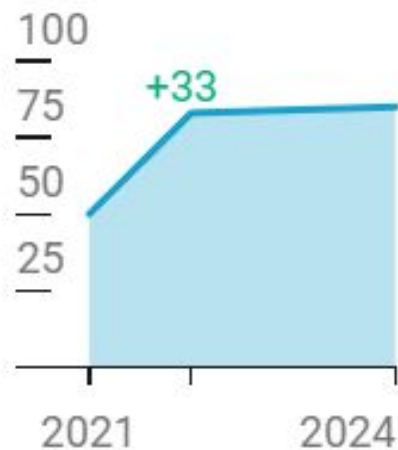
Coordinate supply & demand for help (e.g. for UAF, IDPs)



Coordinate volunteers



Attract external resources



Meet the needs of vulnerable social groups

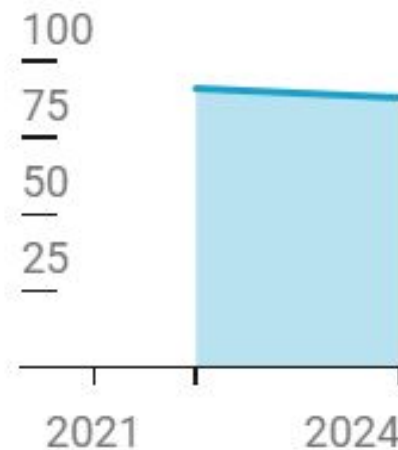
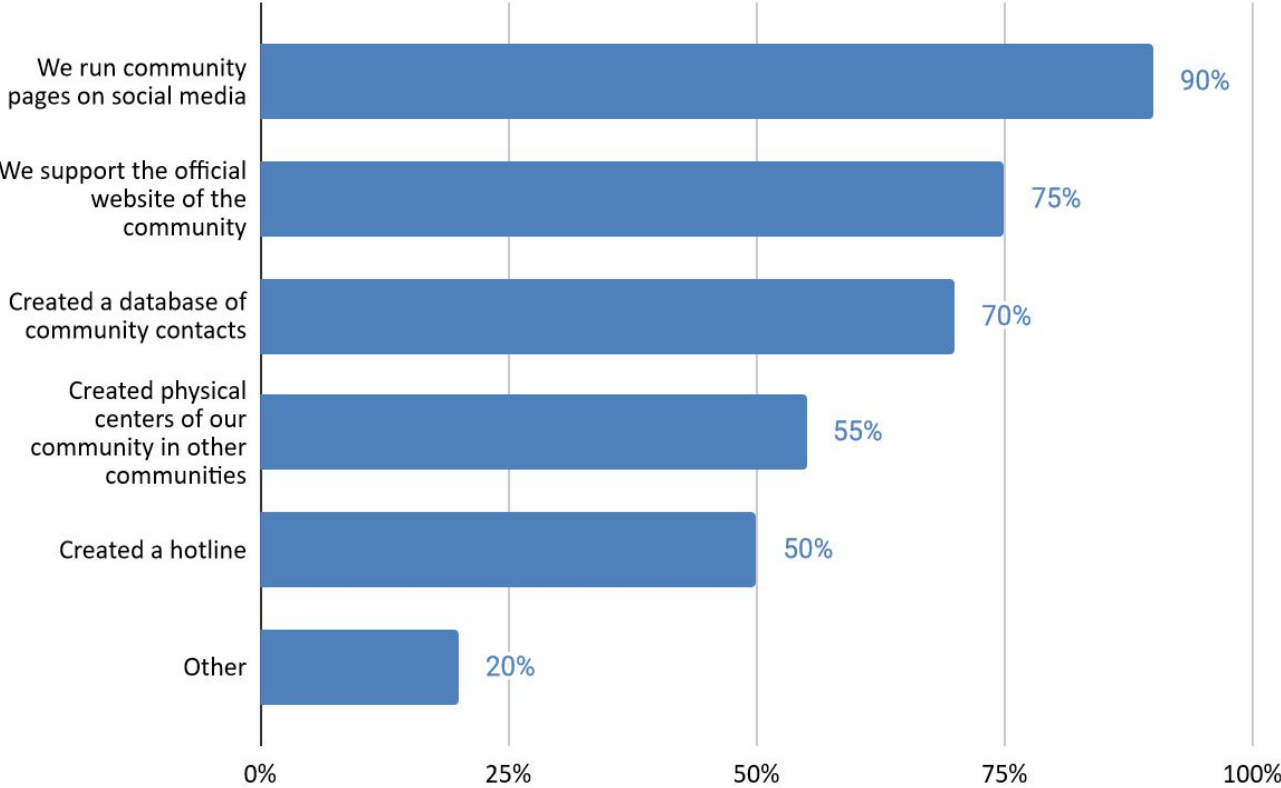


Photo: Serhiy Kornyluk, 2022, Novovolynsk

The “Cohesion” & “Coping” in the case of Ukraine: Innovation by occupied municipalities



N=20 (displaced LSGs), means to sustain communication with residents among displaced LSGs

Keudel et al. 2024

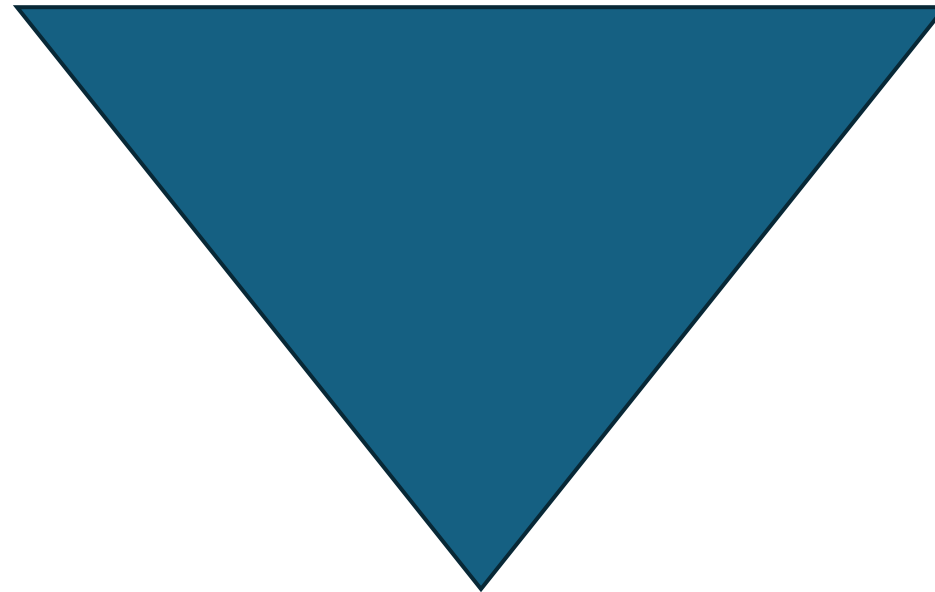


Photo: I'Mariupol, <https://www.mhelp.org.ua/>

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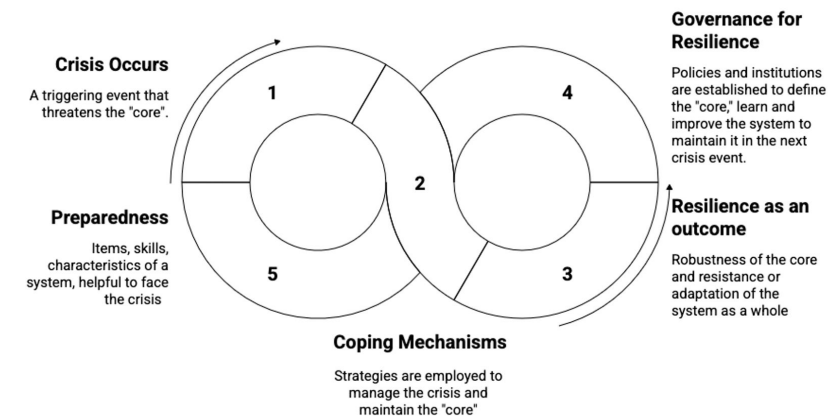
networked interaction based on shared values & goals

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Coping

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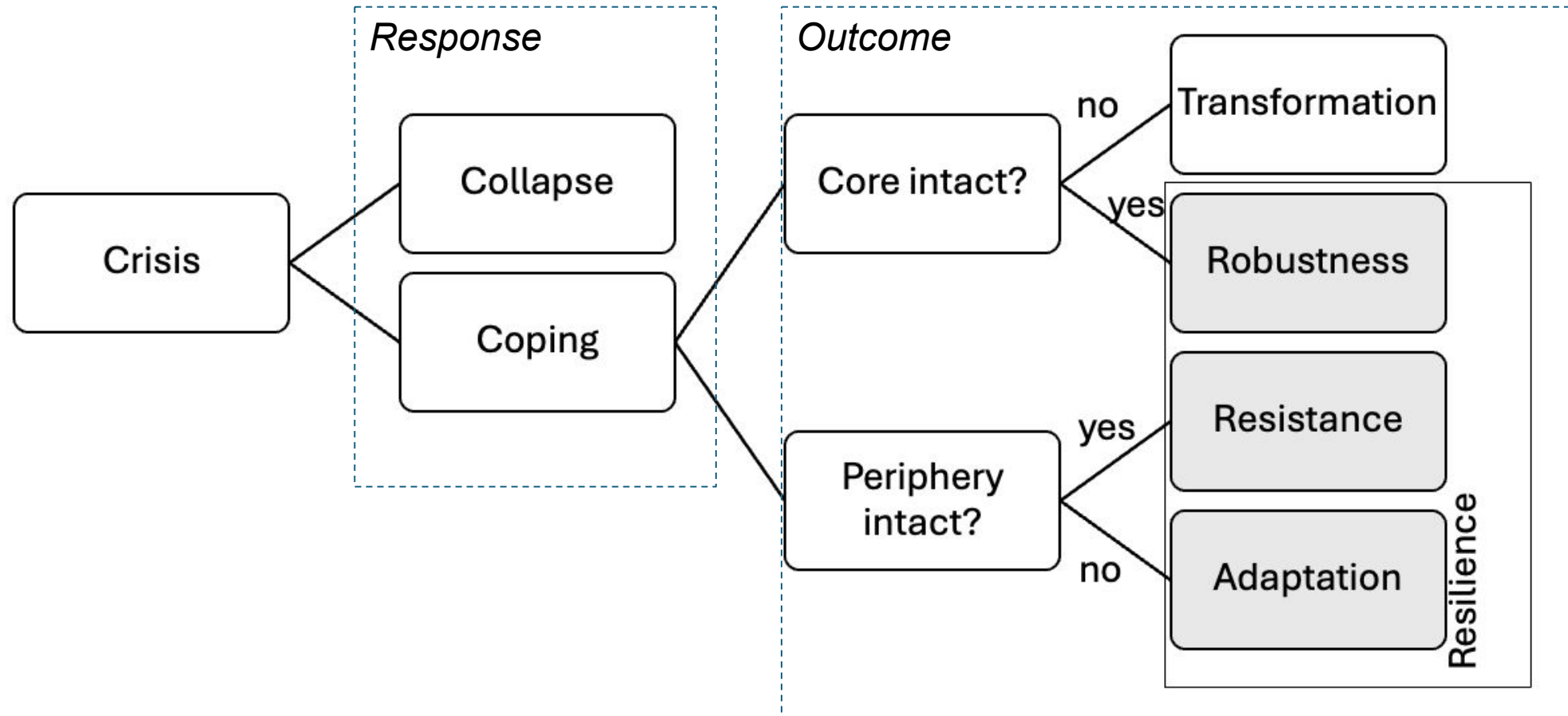
The Cycle of Societal Resilience



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Back-up

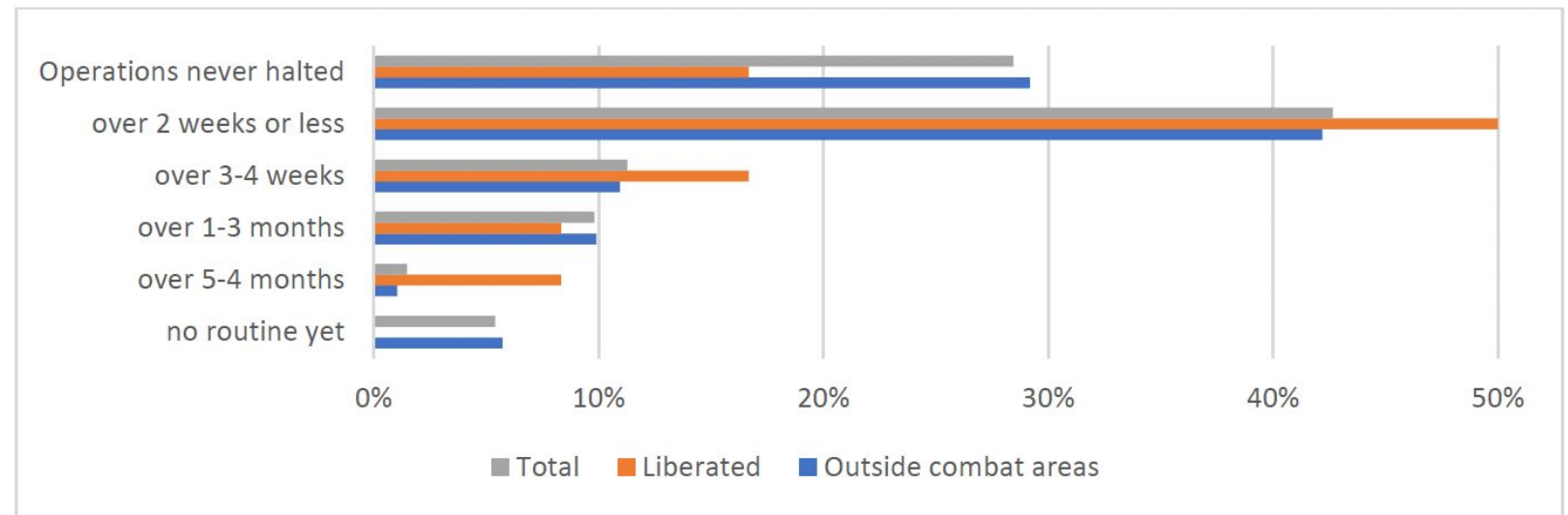
Resilience as an outcome: Conceptual map



Operationalizing robustness of the “core”

- the ability of a referent object to “bounce back” after a disruptive event (Olsson et al. 2015)
- similar to resistance: a subject returns to its previous state (Kutsenko 2025).

Figure 2: First response: resistance and return to routine



Note: No. outside combat areas = 192, No. liberated = 12, No. total = 204

Question: Over which timeframe after the full-scale invasion or after liberation (if your community was occupied) did local authority in your community return to routine operations (processes work, employees know what to do)?

Outcomes of coping for the “periphery”

Resistance

- “successfully **opposing** external shocks” (Kutsenko, 2025)
- Peripheral (auxiliary) functions/characteristics remain intact

Adaptation

- adjustments that “help ‘**close the gap**’ between the **current strain and the community’s needs** and abilities, while keeping core values” (Canetti et al. 2014, pp. 4–5).

What needs to change for the core to stay the same?