EU-LISTCO

Europe's External Action and the Dual Challenges of Limited Statehood and Contested Orders

RESEARCHING RESILIENCE

Implications for Case Studies in Europe's Neighbourhoods

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses both the conditions under which resilience in areas of limited statehood (ALS) and contested orders (CO) can be fostered and the potential contributions by the EU and its member states. Drawing on EU-LISTCO's conceptual framework, the paper defines the analytical category of resilience and provides a roadmap to study its characteristics in configurations of ALS and CO. In fact, it applies – and further problematizes – such concepts to the Eastern and Southern neighbourhood. It formulates a number of general hypotheses about how resilience can be fostered in these contexts, highlighting its historically contingent and context-specific nature, discussing how external actors could contribute in fostering resilience. These sets of hypotheses are meant to provide a roadmap for – and be tested in – subsequent EU-LISTCO empirical enquiries.

1. INTRODUCTION

With the release of the European Union's Global Strategy (EUGS) in 2016, resilience-building became the new guiding principle for the EU's foreign and security policy in the EU's neighbourhoods. Resilience is defined as "the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crisis," and the EU commits to "support different paths to resilience to its east and south, focusing on the most acute dimensions of fragility and targeting those where we can make a meaningful difference" (European Union 2016: 9, 25). By focusing on the capacities of existing structures, the EU aims to contribute to stable governance arrangements in its neighbourhood that are able to deter potential security threats to the EU. The new resilience paradigm may lead to substantial changes in EU foreign and security policies, thus potentially impacting the relationship between the EU and its Eastern and Southern neighbourhoods (EN and SN respectively), as well as with the 'neighbourhood of the neighbourhood' (Bendiek 2017; Juncos 2017; Wagner and Anholt 2016).

The concept of resilience has received substantial academic and policy attention, quickly evolving into a key concept across international policymaking for development, foreign, and security policies. Different fields of research define resilience differently and relate it to different social systems (Walklate et al. 2013; Bahadur et al. 2010). The security-oriented literature conceptualises resilience as a condition of safety to be reached by protecting critical infrastructure and devising measures of emergency response (Boin and McConnell 2007; Brasset and Vaughan-Williams 2015; Kaufmann 2015; Manea 2017). The psychological and sociological literature focuses on the capacities of individuals and societies to cope with disasters

and risks (Aldrich and Meyer 2014; Bonß 2015; Endreß and Rampp 2015; Wilson 2015). In the development-oriented literature, resilience is conceptualised as an antidote to social vulnerabilities in the shape of conditions and capacities for establishing sustainable political processes and enabling economic development (Adger et al. 2011; Barett and Constas 2014; Bernier and Meinzen-Dick 2014; Gelbard et al. 2015; Harrison and Chiroro 2017; Ryan 2012). Moreover, there are various critical perspectives on resilience which suggest that resilience is a policy concept that promotes neoliberal governmentality and therefore tends to mask societal inequalities (Cannon and Müller-Mahn 2010; Mckeown and Glenn 2017). Taking account of these debates, the EU-LISTCO consortium seeks to better define resilience and the conditions under which it can be fostered in EN and SN countries affected by areas of limited statehood (ALS) and contested orders (CO), as well as the potential contributions of the EU and its member states (Börzel and Risse 2018).

This paper presents EU-LISTCO's approach to resilience and strengthening resilience in ALS/CO in the SN and EN, linking the conceptual debate to the regional debate and focusing on the implications of both for empirical research. The first section translates the broad policy concept of resilience into an analytical category and provides a roadmap to study its characteristics in configurations of ALS and CO, formulating a number of general hypotheses about how resilience can be fostered in these contexts. In doing so, it argues that the stable social and political conditions that external actors must aim for to foster resilience are historically contingent and context specific. Relatedly, the second and third sections contextualize and adjust the analytical framework in light of the specific ALS and CO dynamics prevailing in the EN and SN, refining and complementing the general hypotheses. The hypotheses formulated in the paper are meant to provide a roadmap for – and be tested in – subsequent EU-LISTCO empirical enquiries.

2. RESILIENCE IN ALS/CO

Focusing on collective capacities rather than on individual capacities, EU-LISTCO conceptualises resilience as the ability of societies to manage opportunities and contain risks emanating from ALS/CO (Börzel and Risse 2018). The consortium focuses on resilience in the form of adaptive capacities of societies as "their ability to learn from past experiences and adjust themselves to future challenges" and transformative capacities as "their ability to craft sets of institutions that foster individual welfare and sustainable societal robustness towards future crises" (Keck and Sakdapolrak 2013: 5). As opposed to mere coping, resilience as adaptability and transformability involves medium or high levels of change, with a view to the present and future well-being of the society.

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2.1 Resilience of What? Societal Resilience in ALS/CO

EU-LISTCO argues that resilience needs to be distinguished from general system stability. Stability is the capacity of a system to persist or to 'bounce back'. However, as regimes and their public institutions in ALS/CO can be deeply dysfunctional, neglectful of human rights, and resistant to change, they are not necessarily the backbone of a resilient society (Biscop 2016: 2). Indeed, in some countries in the EU's neighbourhood, citizens at times need to be resilient against their own governments (Grevi 2016; Techau 2016).

EU-LISTCO's research will not focus on the resilience of regimes or system stability. Instead, it focuses on societal resilience as a precondition for effective governance arrangements that provide goods and services to the society. Understood as a process, societal resilience means that social units constantly engage in managing risks, including information gathering, resource mobilization, capacity building, and leadership. These processes need to be backed up by law enforcement and societal mechanisms for conflict resolution, which require a corresponding institutional structure (Carabine and Wilkinson 2016). Importantly, societal resilience comprises important elements of relationship resilience between the social unit and the corresponding institutional structure. As noted by Jones and Chandran (2008), it is neither just the society nor the state (or the institutional structure) that needs to be resilient. Rather, the social contract between the two needs to be included in the analysis.

In ALS/CO, the corresponding institutional structure need not necessarily be the state and its institutions. Instead, functional equivalents to modern statehood may regularly provide collective goods and services to at least parts of the society (Draude 2007). Functional equivalents in ALS/CO can be traditional authorities, religious leaders, warlords, rebel groups, development agencies, international organizations, or companies, etc. (Risse et al. 2018). Hence, EU-LISTCO will take the resilience of both state institutions and non-state governance institutions into account where they are pertinent for the resilience of societies.

2.2 Resilience to What? Risks Emanating from ALS/CO

EU-LISTCO analyses risks emanating from ALS/CO, which can be of regional, global and diffuse character, and of domestic or external origin (Magen et al. 2019). The most pertinent risks are those that could trigger governance breakdowns and violent conflict. While being sources of risks, ALS/CO only turn into security threats to the EU and its member states if they deteriorate into governance breakdown and violent conflict.

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2.3 Implications for the Case Study Templates

Societal resilience can pertain to different social units; for example, households, communities, and societies. The national level may be the right unit of analysis, but it is not by default. Indeed, in many countries in the EN and SN, the sub-national (local/district) level may be a more appropriate unit of analysis for exploring micro-processes and techniques that are related to societal resilience (Joseph 2014). For the empirical analysis of resilience, the research templates need to determine collective units of analysis, comprising specifications for the respective territory and timeframe for the analysis. These units can be located at the local, national or regional level, as long as they comprise clear boundaries of what is considered internal and external.

3. POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES

External actors who wish to strengthen resilience in ALS/CO need to define the objectives of their interventions and identify factors conducive to reaching these objectives. The EU and its various member states have differing approaches to fostering resilience (Bargués-Pedreny et al. 2019). The following section discusses how to strengthen resilience in contexts affected by ALS/CO that can lead to governance breakdown and violent conflict, and outlines some implications for the research templates.

3.1 Strengthening Resilience in ALS/CO

EU-LISTCO proceeds on the assumption that strengthening resilience does not equal the preservation and protection of a political or social system as a whole against external influences. Strengthening resilience needs to be distinguished from stabilization as the preservation of political and social order in situations of crisis and rapid change. Neither is strengthening resilience limited to decreasing the negative effects of risks emanating from ALS/CO.

Rather, external actors need to determine the multiple political and social conditions in a community that are desirable and then contribute to stabilizing these conditions. Desirable conditions are conditions that preserve the 'centre of gravity' of the community in terms of functionality, structure, and identity (Endreß and Rampp 2015: 49). The centre of gravity is closely related to the respective governance system of the social unit. However, this centre of gravity will continuously develop and change in view of current risks and opportunities. Moreover, in ALS/CO, where societies are often fragmented, there cannot be a 'final end condition' that is ideal for all members of the society (Pospisil and Besancenot 2014: 618). As Bahadur et al.

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(2010: 3) note, strengthening resilience should not be considered as "restoring equilibrium because systems do not have a stable state to which they should return after a disturbance". What is more, the sources of resilience of one community can be causally related to the sources of vulnerability and risks of another. Hence, 'desirable conditions' need to be contextualised "with respect to their historicity or their dependence on specific temporal, spatial and social contexts and the parameters of their genesis" (Endreß 2015: 538).

For strengthening resilience, external contributions need to focus on strengthening existing structures. These structures need to be embedded in the society already and cannot be 'built' (Menkhaus 2012). As opposed to simple governance contributions (e.g., oral vaccinations), strengthening existing structures performing more complex governance tasks is a long-term endeavour (Krasner and Risse 2014). External contributions cannot be limited to short-term, project-based livelihood assistance (Ryan 2012).

Moreover, external actors should carefully weigh how far they should aim at strengthening the society's capacities for persistence (coping capacities) or for change (adaptive/transformative capacities). Besides, to be effective, the respective target societal capacities need to be identified as conducive to resilience ex ante, while actual capacities to withstand risks and threats can only be assessed in retrospect (Endreß 2015).

Ideally, external actors' measures to strengthen resilience should be conducted before a tipping point has been reached where an ALS/CO becomes governance breakdown and violent conflict. Regardless of the pervasiveness of ALS/CO, there will always be a certain level of resilience attached to at least parts of the society, which external actors can strengthen. Such measures are not a management tool for imminent crisis but have a preventive character (Van Metre 2014: 4). However, resilience strengthening can also take place in the aftermath of governance breakdown and violent conflict.

3.2 Strengthening Resilience after Governance Breakdown and Violent Conflict

When societies have experienced situations of overextension and/or physical and mental overload resulting from governance breakdown and/or violent conflict, they require the capacities to transition into a new post-conflict setting without relapsing into violence. This transition requires societal members to undergo fundamental change processes at a point at which the level of resilience in the society is at its weakest (De Carvalho et al. 2014; De Coning 2016; Menkhaus 2012). Sources of societal resilience are particularly crucial for these change processes to unfold peacefully.

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Under these conditions, measures for strengthening resilience will focus on social trust-building, addressing grievances fairly, and supporting a new vision for the local governance system (Menkhaus 2012). Regarding strengthening domestic institutions, measures will focus more on reconstruction than on reform. The distinct conditions for strengthening resilience after governance breakdown and violent conflict are considered separately in Section 4.

3.3 Implications for the Case Study Templates

Research templates should consider as paramount two reference points of 'desirable conditions' which external actors can aim at to strengthen resilience:

- Citizens having adequate access to goods and services provided by the corresponding institutional structure;
- Consent to the public order being in place and supported by key parts of the society (Pospisil and Besancenot 2014).

4. CONDITIONS FOR FOSTERING RESILIENCE IN ALS/CO

In order to determine the potential contributions of the EU and its members states to strengthen resilience in its neighbourhoods, conditions need to be identified under which resilience can be fostered. EU-LISTCO case studies will not cover all hypotheses and questions discussed below but will select only those most appropriate to the given cases.

4.1 Social Trust

Social trust is a personal attitude that determines how an individual interacts with other individuals and institutions. It is conducive for participation as well as the building of new norms (Aldrich 2012). EU-LISTCO understands social trust as "a cooperative attitude towards other people based on the optimistic expectation that others are likely to respect one's own interests" (Draude et al. 2018: 354; see also Börzel and Risse [2016]). In ALS/CO, social trust amongst local populations means that they can develop collective action capacities and a culture of cooperation regardless of the functioning of remaining state structures (Gambetta 1988). The ability to act collectively and cooperatively is an important component of resilience, as it helps communities to quickly recover from the negative effects of risks in a coordinated manner and actively prevent governance breakdown and violent conflict. It can also limit the transaction costs of related actions (Bahadur et al. 2010). EU-LISTCO focuses on both the amount of group trust and on how people feel about the social trust directed towards the group.

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Horizontally, social trust can take the shape of bonds between societal members or bridges between members from different communities (Putnam et al. 2004). Social trust can connect families and communities to their home territories and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and joint approaches to organizing daily lives in the presence of violence/crime. Social trust facilitates the emergence of shared identities and community solidarity that may span different constituencies (economic, political, and cultural networks), e.g., in efforts to exclude violent actors (Imbusch 2015). However, social trust can also lead to societal fragmentation if it fosters in-group favouritism (Hammond and Axelrod 2006), thereby limiting the capacity for collective action to a certain group and excluding others. One important source of in-group favouritism is inequality. As well as economic and political inequalities in the society (vertical inequalities), inequalities between groups (horizontal inequalities) can also increase acceptance of and support for violence and the likelihood of conflict (Bartusevicius 2014), and perceptions of such inequality as unfair are at least as important as actual inequality here (Rustad 2016). Hence, social trust supports resilience only if it is non-exclusive and based on shared trust experiences or prosocial values (Börzel and Risse 2016).

Vertically, trust can also be directed towards institutions. Trust in institutions arises from experiences of fair and transparent interactions between citizens and institutions that lead citizens to assume that these institutions are trustworthy and reliable (Börzel and Risse 2016). Trust relations between citizens and the police/other (non-state) security providers are particularly crucial in ALS/CO, as those actors may play a key role in triggering or preventing violent conflict.

4.1.1 Strengthening Social Trust

Social trust is an important access point for external actors to contribute to strengthening resilience in ALS/CO. As trust is based on the individual's positive experiences of cooperation, it can be influenced by enabling such experiences, but is also easily disappointed by negative ones.

External actors can foster social trust through strengthening the inclusiveness of social identities and promoting continuous exchange between communities (horizontal trust) as well as strengthening the fairness and transparency of institutions (vertical trust). Measures can involve incentives for community participation, creation of local institutions, design of infrastructure, and use of new technologies (Aldrich 2012). In ALS/CO, fostering positive experience should certainly involve police and/or other (non-state) security providers, but might also include civil society and business (Davis 2012).

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4.1.2 Implications for Case Study Templates

Hypotheses:

> Societies are more likely to manage opportunities and contain risks emanating from ALS/CO if they have high levels of

> (i) social trust and

> (ii) trust in institutions

Related issue areas/questions:

- To what extent have societal members shared ideas and narratives of desirable living conditions and good social order? What ideal conditions do they envisage?

- To what extent is the society characterised by (group) inequalities?

- Is there personalised trust among people living in the same neighbourhood/ community?

- Is there group-based/particularistic trust in the society, and is it used for providing governance? If yes, which parts of the society are included/excluded?

- Is there generalised trust which facilitates governance provision beyond local communities?

- To what extent do key local actors and institutions (police, judges, teachers, doctors, and religious/traditional leaders) implement their governance function according to principles of fairness and transparency?

- Do these actors and institutions enjoy trust which endows them with the capacities to become 'agents of change'?

After governance breakdown/violent conflict:

- To what extent have social networks been disrupted? Are social support systems still in place (Norris et al. 2008)?

- Do certain groups hold grievances against other parts of the population?

- Do remaining trust relationships feature a strong discrimination of insiders and outsiders?

- How has the migration/displacement/death of community members impacted social trust?

- Do people feel a sense of belonging that motivates them to rebuild the infrastructure and social networks of a community (Norris et al. 2008)?

4.2 Appropriate Institutional Design

The ability of social systems to deal with risks substantially depends on their institutions, not least because those institutions manage the society's politics and

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resources (Joseph 2014). These institutions can be located at the local, domestic, and regional levels and consist of formal and informal, state and non-state institutions. Communities are more resilient if the institutional structure enables community voices to be included in relevant policy processes (Bahadur et al. 2010). These conditions are met if institutions are open, inclusive, and able to channel societal dissent in a non-violent, negotiated manner (Bahadur et al. 2010; Ryan 2012).

Moreover, it is crucial for the resilience of a society that the institutional design of the governance arrangement providing goods and services is effective and 'fit for purpose' (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018a). In ALS/CO, fit for purpose means that the institutional structure has the flexibility to adapt to changing conditions and to sustain its operations and functionality when confronted with risks and threats (De Coning 2016). Flexibility facilitates institutional learning from situations of risk/threat exposure and innovation to adjust to future risks/threats (Carabine and Wilkinson 2016).

On the one hand, flexibility can be achieved through decentralization (Bahadur et al. 2010). Decentralised institutions can connect marginalised communities with governance providers and facilitate information and resource exchange between the capital and peripheries (top-down/bottom-up). Decentralised institutions are also more likely to provide opportunities for local participation and self-organization. In ALS/CO, the quality of institutions and their service provision at the local level is particularly pertinent. In the absence of national institutions, local governance institutions can contribute to the prevention of governance breakdown and violent conflict (Wig and Tollefsen 2016).

On the other hand, flexibility can also involve risk-spreading mechanisms. For example, higher governance levels can support local governance systems at times when they struggle to deal with risks (Algicia and Tarko 2014). Moreover, overlaps in the functions of governance systems enable cross-level interactions – i.e., if one system fails, another can take over. These overlaps can also be situated between the national and the regional level (e.g., regional security architectures). They contribute to the preparedness and planning capacities of societies in times of increased risk/threat exposure (Bahadur et al. 2010). Such overlaps require institutions to cooperate with each other to be able to implement more complex governance tasks.

4.2.1 Strengthening Appropriate Institutional Design

Institutions are good access points for external support, as they can provide angles to make resource allocations to the society more open and inclusive. In societies confronted with a high level of risk, measures of justice and equity are especially important when the tasks of coping with these risks are distributed within the

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society (Bahadur et al. 2010). Measures can involve capacity development for adaptive and effective resource management and institutional learning at different governance levels. Moreover, institutional processes to establish rules and public regulations can be rendered more inclusive and open. External measures can address institutional decision-making and participation as well as the distribution of burdens and benefits (Walklate et al. 2013).

4.2.2 Implications for Case Study Templates

Hypotheses:

Societies are more likely to manage opportunities and contain risks emanating from ALS/CO if institutions:

(i)   provide opportunities for societal self-organization, and;

(ii)   are able to cooperate, and;

(iii)   are flexible.

Institutional flexibility can take different forms, including:

- Multi-level governance arrangements;

- Built-in risk spreading mechanisms;

- An ability to learn and innovate;

- An ability to facilitate public discourse.

Related issue areas/questions:

- Which institutions provide goods and services, for whom, and at which governance levels?

- Are mandates clear? Do overlaps in mandates exist?

- Do (state) institutions have regulatory capacities to coordinate governance interventions by other actors and orchestrate complex governance tasks?

- How does the institutional structure handle situations of change and uncertainty?

- Can citizens express discontent with the governance system?

- Does the institutional structure provide opportunities for societal self-organization and public debate?

After governance breakdown/violent conflict:

- To what extent are institutions still functional?

- Have external actors assumed governance provision in certain sectors/regions?

4.3 Legitimacy and Social Acceptance of Governors

Legitimacy and social acceptance pertain to the question of whether governance actors and institutions are considered legitimate governors by the population. EU-LISTCO defines the legitimacy of governors as "a given social group's or population's sense of obligation or willingness to accept their authority" (Börzel and Risse 2018: 23); also a crucial condition for the effectiveness of governance. Perceptions of legitimacy can facilitate the support of key parts of the society and voluntary compliance with rules (Schmelzle 2015). If governance actors and institutions are not considered legitimate, order contestation becomes more likely and the enforcement of rules more costly (and potentially more repressive).

In ALS/CO, resilient societies need to be able to undergo processes of adaptation and transition, voluntary compliance of key parts of the population with (new) rules and courses of action can facilitate the required change processes. Change cannot be implemented by coercive means alone. Actors who are considered legitimate governors can request compliance from the community at times of risk exposure and uncertainty in order to initiate and implement change processes (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018a).

Legitimacy is a normatively grounded belief (Levi et al. 2009). It is not a characteristic a governance actor can claim but is attributed to a governor by others (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018a). Legitimacy beliefs do not necessarily correlate with positive experiences and social trust. A governor who is endowed with legitimacy (e.g., a traditional leader by birth right) does not necessarily always have to comport in a fair, transparent, and inclusive manner for his or her claim to the right to rule to be accepted by the community (Black 2008).

Hence, legitimacy beliefs are more robust and persistent than social trust. While social trust can be easily disappointed by negative experiences of cooperation, legitimacy perceptions might erode gradually or after a delay. In ALS/CO, social trust within groups might be very strong but the legitimacy of (state) institutions comparatively weak. Therefore, social trust and perceptions of who can legitimately govern can diverge and need to be explored in a context-specific manner in the case studies.

4.3.1 Strengthening Legitimacy and Social Acceptance

External actors can impact the sources of certain governors' legitimacy by reinforcing their output legitimacy (effectiveness), input/throughput legitimacy (inclusive institutional arrangements, participation), or traditional/charismatic authority (leadership training). However, influencing legitimacy perceptions is not

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only challenging for external actors but can also become normatively questionable (Eickhoff and Müller 2017). This means that legitimacy perceptions may be more of a precondition (though an important one) than an angle for external actors to actively strengthen resilience in a society.

4.3.2 Implications for Case Study Templates

Hypothesis:

> Societies are more likely to manage opportunities and contain risks emanating from ALS/CO if governance actors enjoy high levels of legitimacy.

Related issue areas/questions:

- To what extent do citizens perceive governance arrangements as legitimate?
- Who do local elites consider to be legitimate governors?
- Is the political/social order or the governance system challenged? How and by whom?
- How is dissent to the right to rule expressed? Do civic uprisings/demonstrations take place?
- Do (violent) actors seek to establish alternative modes of justice/security? Are they considered legitimate governors by parts of the society?

After governance breakdown/violent conflict:

- Does the population hold grievances against governance actors – e.g., the government/security forces/militias?

4.4 Material Factors and Resources

Material factors like natural assets and human capital are very important components of societies' potential to manage opportunities and contain risks arising from ALS/CO. Such risks can engender costs and development deficits and require resources to manage and transform into opportunities. As Norris et al. (2008: 143) note, "communities must develop economic resources, reduce risk and resource inequities, and attend to their areas of greatest social vulnerability".

While natural resources and their distribution play an important role (i.e., in public/private revenue and/or external influence on extraction/exploitation), the availability of livelihood strategies, access to productive assets, and the diversity of options for income generation are also particularly important for societal resilience. In sum, a community is more resilient when it has a wide variety of economic opportunities (Bahadur et al. 2010). In ALS/CO, where non-state actors such as self-

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help groups, civil society, traditional authorities, and private companies play an important role in governance provision, these opportunities do not have to be provided and regulated by state institutions. As Bernier and Meinzen-Dick (2014: 4) note:

> Collective-action institutions, such as producer organizations, can effectively allow members not only to share risk but also to diversify income, access new markets, and learn new skills and technologies, all of which have important implications for building diversity into social systems.

4.4.1 Strengthening Resilience through Material Factors and Resources

External actors can influence the availability of resources – e.g., by making external resources and assets available to communities and by building or rehabilitating domestic infrastructure (Bernier and Meinzen-Dick 2014). However, the interconnectedness of vulnerabilities and resilience within a society needs to be accounted for. For example, while the delivery of weapons to one community may increase the resilience of this community to manage specific security-related risks in ALS/CO, this measure might greatly increase the vulnerability and/or level of risk for neighbouring communities.

As factors in societies' capacities for self-reliance, domestic resources and assets are more pertinent access points for strengthening resilience. Measures can aim at increasing economic diversification, poverty reduction, and financial services availability for large parts of the society (Carabine and Wilkinson 2016).

4.4.2 Implications for Case Study Templates

Hypothesis:

> Societies are more likely to manage opportunities and contain risks emanating from ALS/CO if a variety of economic opportunities are available.

Related issue areas/questions:

- How diverse is the domestic economy? Is it integrated into a regional/global market?

- Are financial services available and to which parts of the society?

- Which vulnerabilities are most prevalent in the society, and which parts of the society are most affected? Do vulnerabilities threaten people's livelihoods/ survival?

- Which social, economic, and professional associations exist in the society?

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- Can members of the society migrate to find livelihoods?

- How are natural resources controlled (publicly/privately)?

- Are resources provided by external actors? To whom are these resources provided and with what agenda (e.g., regime preservation/change)?

- Is basic infrastructure (e.g., roads, airports, administration) in place that allows for non-state actors such as Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)/civil society actors to provide services?

- Does the level of violence/crime allow non-state actors such as PPPs/ international organizations to provide services?

- Are technologies perceived as risks or opportunities? What is the potential for technological innovation in the society?

- Are property/land rights clearly regulated and agreed on (see Davis 2012)?

After governance breakdown/violent conflict:

- Is critical infrastructure still in place?

- Do violent conflict parties retain means of coercion? Do they autonomously control social and political activities in certain regions?

5. RESEARCHING CONDITIONS FOR STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN THE SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

The SN – i.e., countries neighbouring the EU in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) – is often considered a very unstable region that presents numerous challenges to Europe's political preparedness, ranging from radicalization and violence to migration and socio-economic issues. The political contestations from 2011 in, for example, Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, Libya, and Yemen have revealed the longstanding relations – and their tensions – between state, non-state, and external actors in those countries. On the one hand, these uprisings not only triggered multiple processes of governance breakdown (e.g., in Egypt and Tunisia) but also developed into civil and proxy wars (e.g., in Syria, Libya, and Yemen), resulting in an regional increase in ALS (Börzel and Risse 2018). Those dynamics also produced new forms of governance in which non-state, local, and external actors (Collombier et al. 2016) have begun to occupy a central place. In this context, determining the conditions in which resilience can be strengthened is of utmost importance and presents interrelated analytical challenges.

5.1 Contextualizing Resilience in the Southern Neighbourhood

There are two main interrelated challenges that arise in contextualizing the theme of resilience in the SN. The first concerns how to translate the word 'resilience' into

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Arabic, the closest equivalents being *muruna* (malleability) or *takayyuf* (adaptation), which refer to 'a capacity to adapt', while the UN literature in Arabic (FAO 2019; UN-Habitat 2019) translates resilience as 'the capacity to face crises'. The second entails the applicability of such a concept to the historical specificities of the region. For many years, scholars associated the concept of resilience with authoritarianism, using it to describe the political robustness of regimes to maintain their grip on power despite domestic and internal pressures (Bellin 2012; Heydemann and Leenders 2013). More recently, the concept of resilience has become associated with political resistance and quotidian survival in the face of adverse and oppressive structures of power (Capasso 2018) – e.g., the long-standing Palestinian tradition of *sumud* (endurance) (Hage 2013; Meari 2014; Ryan 2015) towards Israeli occupation. This view of resilience as a capacity to escape and challenge the regulative forces of control highlights people's 'resilient as resistant' capacities to get by and manoeuvre the yoke of authoritarian 'resilience'. Therefore, resilience not only varies according to the final objective (to what?) but also relates to the range of actors (of what?) that shape the political dynamics of societies in the SN.

5.1.1 Resilience of What: Political and Social Conditions

EU LISTCO focuses on societal resilience as a pre-condition for effective governance arrangements that provide goods and services to the society. When seeking to understand resilience and ALS/CO in the SN context, however, it is essential to take into account the historical and political specificities of the region; in particular, to grasp the interconnectedness of the multiple and diverse domestic actors that constitute the local societal dynamics of SN countries and external factors and actors that shape governance practices in the MENA region.

The protests in 2011 shed light not only on the failure of Arab regimes to guarantee a pluralist and inclusive democracy, but – more importantly – on the challenging socio-economic conditions that characterised people's lives. The increasing repression and corruption (Hibou 2011; Khalili and Schwedler 2010), coupled with three decades of neoliberal reforms in the Arab world, have complicated the picture of a simple dichotomy between the 'Arab people' and the 'regime' (Guazzone and Pioppi 2009). The changes of the last 30 years in many MENA countries reflect a "profound shift from (some form of) state-developmentalism toward intrinsically authoritarian modalities of neoliberal government" (Bogaert 2013: 215). The interests of ruling domestic elites and (global) economic elites have become increasingly intertwined (Kadri 2016) and paved the way for more authoritarian repression. For instance, neoliberal reforms have prompted Egyptian elites to increasingly rely on force as a guarantee of wealth accumulation, leading to an inevitable expansion in both the size and the remit of the state security apparatus (Abdelrahman 2016). At the

same time, however, it was the increasing reliance on violence to supress societal grievances that helped create a focus for mobilization and widespread protest.

Such interconnectedness means that the roles of local actors – whether state or non-state – in societal resilience cannot be divorced from that of external ones. In fact, it is likely that the higher the level of interconnectedness among local and external actors, the more difficult will be the task of identifying local resilience for researchers. Nevertheless, research could focus on identifying indicators for two interrelated phenomena: firstly, how the roles of and connections among different actors (e.g., leaders, tribes, religious figures, militias, external actors) affect resilience in society; and secondly, whether any common goal and vision (e.g., violence, resources, ending conflict, reconciliation) prompts the different actors to be resilient. This focus on both actors and goals might help to capture the conditions that allow resilience to emerge, suggest the forms it might take, and identify opportunities for the EU to foster it.

5.1.2 Resilience to What: Risks Emanating from ALS/CO

In the SN, ALS arise due to violent conflicts (e.g., in Libya, Syria, Yemen) where central governments have undergone a complete fragmentation, or there is ongoing – though less violent – CO (e.g., in Egypt, Tunisia) due to which the state is partly unable to deliver public goods and provide security. In both cases, risks emanate from the possibility of governance breakdown that not only fosters increasing internecine violence but also provides opportunities for external powers to interfere and exercise further influence (Blumi 2018; Mezran and Miller 2017; Phillips 2016). In other words, risks emerge both internally, from the power struggle between diverse local actors, and externally, as different foreign powers compete for regional hegemony. In such cases, local conflicts can easily turn into proxy wars (as in Libya and Syria), and it becomes necessary to disentangle the levels of interconnectedness and involvement of each actor on the ground.

These internal and external aspects of CO are more likely to escalate into security crises when they are combined and mutually reinforcing. For instance, intra-state cooperation and/or contestations between external actors are clearly contributing to the ongoing crisis in legitimacy in SN countries. In the cases of Libya and Syria, for instance, the lack of public consent for the Qaddafi and Assad regimes and the weakness of state structures have been decisive contextual factors. The protests against those regimes were tipping points that offered opportunities for external actors to exercise influence in the region. In both cases, international and regional powers (Kamrava 2011) continue to finance and support different groups, bringing about a geo-economic and geopolitical conflict.

Identifying what makes resilience possible in such contexts requires unpacking all the internal and external aspects of CO in the empirical analysis, considering both domestic dynamics and the international sphere. Likewise, strengthening resilience means operating at different levels. It requires understanding how external actors' involvement influences the resilience of local actors and how the latter, in turn, use those dynamics to maintain their power at the local level (Dannreuther 2015; Huber 2015).

Hypotheses:

Internal and external CO are more likely to escalate into governance breakdown and violent conflict when they reinforce one another.

ALS in the SN are less likely to escalate into governance breakdown when external actors do not intervene competitively.

5.2 Strengthening Resilience in the Southern Neighbourhood

5.2.1 Social Trust

An analysis of social trust is important in understanding the capacities of the different communities in the SN to react to challenges of ALS, and thereby provide access to goods and services, as well as public order. The cases of Egypt and Libya, for instance, highlight how social trust can change according to the developing political conditions, thus affecting patterns of resilience. After the withdrawal of security forces in 2011, different groups of Egyptians came together regardless of their political views and established neighbourhood popular committees (El-Meehy 2012) as a means to help and sustain each other. In the aftermath of the elections, which took place two years later, clashes erupted between supporters of the ruling party, the Muslim Brotherhood, and those opposing its views. Because of those clashes, the military justified its intervention and returned to power. Similarly, in Libya, during the eight-month NATO-led civil war against the al-Jamahiriyah regime (O'Sullivan 2018), the 'rebels' showed a great degree of security coordination and military collaboration aimed at defeating and deposing the 'regime'. Once that goal was achieved, the rebels fragmented into armed groups (militias) that not only lacked coordination but also started to operate with impunity inside the country. Foreign interference escalated further governance breakdown by supporting and funding different militias.

Those experiences prompt a question: what are those forces at play that influence the changing patterns of trust? Social trust did not simply vary over time, but the ongoing struggles over resources and power directly affected its consistency. The establishment of Shia militias in Iraq or Christian militias in Syria, for instance, have shown how such decisions can undermine social trust among different groups in

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societies. This also suggests that violence, or its unfolding possibilities, often produce a climate of fear and suspicion that is ultimately detrimental to cooperation and trust. Similarly, external factors can also contribute to undermining social trust via foreign military interventions, as happened in Libya in 2011. When the use of violence is validated as a means to practice politics, such actions can have important reverberations and consequences for social trust at the local and international levels, as well as between them (Davidson 2017; Henriksen and Larssen 2016). At the same time, the long-term effects of violence, if shared across a large community, can also create possibilities for fostering social trust and give birth to unexpected bonds and solidarities among people. The case of the Abu Salim prison massacre is an emblematic example which shows how families found the courage to contest the regime through their constant enquiries about the fate of their relatives (Zarrugh 2018).

Another important component is the level of inter-personal trust among members of a given social group. This dynamic is reflected in, for example, the case of Church support for the former regimes in Egypt and Syria. In Libya, tribal leaders have often intervened to de-escalate the violence between different militias and communities (Alunni et al. 2017), fostering cooperation between different groups and promoting reconciliation (Al-Zubayr 2017; Fraihat 2016). In those cases, the political stance of key figures affected social trust in opposite ways, suggesting how the political conditions and actors' goals also contribute to the outcome. Studies on resilience in ALS have also shown that values like faith, family unity, morals and honour often serve as bedrock for resilience (Bruck et al. 2018; Eggerman and Panter-Brick 2010). The role of women in fostering trust and cooperation in households, as well as among diverse social groups, may be a significant one. Research has shown that women can help the promotion of effective governance, cooperation, and trust-based relationships (Fraihat 2016); yet, this requires acknowledging "the existing resilience that women already use or have used, and planning to bolster reserves to ensure that resilience is boosted in future" (Smyth and Sweetman 2015: 408).

To locate how social trust can be fostered among different communities/actors in ALS, it is necessary to grasp the common goals and political vision that can bring different actors together and increase cooperation between them in the long-term.

Hypotheses:

The higher the level of societal trust, the less likely a given social group will take up arms and resort to violence.

ALS in the SN are more likely to be resilient when senior political figures make decisions aimed at reducing the polarization of society.

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5.2.2 Institutional Design

While local institutions can be analysed as an important source of resilience, the level of interaction and interconnectedness between local and global actors must also be considered. The 2011 wave of popular uprisings triggered a process of re-defining the 'social contract' in the SN, shaking the region's institutional designs to the core and prompting a search for an institutional model able to contain those tensions; a gargantuan effort hampered by the severe fragmentation if not complete paralysis of institutions resulting from the subsequent conflicts and violence. The protests also revealed that IMF-led structural adjustment policies and neoliberal reforms have contributed to the empowerment of rent-seeking elites (Kadri 2016) that, in turn, have worsened socio-economic inequalities and the marginalization and rising unemployment of young people (Abbott et al. 2018). The case of Tunisia is emblematic because "local and global political structures impose[d] their constructions of youth as ways to subordinate and control young workers and defuse resistance" (Murphy 2015: 689). Egypt also continues to suffer from similar problems (Sika 2016, 2018; Springborg 2016). For Tunisia, this has created regional economic inequalities that have contributed to profound CO and – at times – radicalization (Fahmi and Meddeb 2015).

More cooperation between actors, however, does not necessarily translate into an effective institutional design. In Libya, there are numerous examples of collaboration among militias and international actors to improve security and curb migration (Gallieni 2017). While these arrangements have proven effective in providing basic services and access to goods to the local population, they also continue to benefit and profit from human trafficking and weapons smuggling (Al-Arabi 2018). Numerous parts of Libya have witnessed the rise of a hybrid security sector where informal non-state actors (e.g., militias, Salafi-groups) now provide security to the local communities and are slowly fragmenting the state's Weberian monopoly on violence (Wehrey 2017). While those arrangements provide answers to day-to-day problems, it is difficult to envision how such hybridity can be sustainable in the long-term due to the fragility and unpredictability of alliances among the groups (Krieg 2017).

Hypothesis:

The risk of ALS/CO escalating into governance breakdown and violent conflict is greater in states and societies where local networks and rent-seeking elites capture state institutions and monopolize economic resources.

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Empirical Questions:

- What institutional designs are resilient enough to solve the day-to-day problems of members of the society?

- Could processes of decentralization (or federalism) also offer an alternative and effective and resilient form of governance?

- Could a more resilient institutional design emerge through a closer collaboration between international financial institutions and local actors, such as youth?

5.2.3 Legitimacy

All of the 2011 protests in the SN radically contested the legitimacy of incumbent regimes, demanding that rulers (and their affiliates) step down and renounce power. Considering the high levels of repression and securitization in the affected countries, the regimes appeared to have relied primarily on the use of force to impose their legitimacy. However, local dynamics were not the only source of legitimacy (Sedgwick 2010), which had become an ambiguous and contested terrain (von Billerbeck and Gippert 2017). External actors had historically contributed to this process, and during the 2011 protests they played an important role, intervening militarily in some contexts while standing by in others. The main task, therefore, is to understand the main sources, values, and constituencies of actors' legitimacy (Schlumberger 2010).

The sources of legitimacy actors rely on in order to claim a certain entitlement to authority and to mobilize people in support of that claim may include religion (Piscatori and Eickelman 2004; Volpi 2009), nationalism (Dawisha 2003) identity-politics (Saouli 2015), traditional values, or, more broadly, ideological discourses (Weeden 1999). Legitimacy perceptions may also be influenced (Carpi and Glioti 2018) by, for instance, violence (Weigand 2017), corruption, informal economies (Hanau-Santini 2018), and/or the provision of goods (Martinez and Eng 2017, 2018). In areas of prolonged conflict (e.g., Syria, Libya, and Yemen), while military control of territories remains a key element in the survival/resilience of state and non-state actors, mechanisms of co-optation and nepotism also allow certain elites/intermediaries to maintain or consolidate power. Understanding how actors gain legitimacy can help determine the long-term sustainability and resilience of their strategies.

Hypotheses:

The more equal the provision of goods and access to resources, the higher will be the perceived legitimacy of central governments.

The higher the level of co-optation of local elites by central governments, the higher will be the legitimacy of state institutions.

Empirical Questions:

- What mechanisms are employed by international, state, and non-state actors to maintain legitimacy perceptions? How does international recognition affect state and non-state actors' legitimacy?

- How do actors convey the content of their sources of legitimacy? What are their modes of communication and practices?

5.2.4 Material Factors and Resources

Socio-economic factors lay at the core of the 2011 protests (Abbott et al. 2018). Until 2011, however, economic indicators continued to show the Arab region making steady progress in terms of the World Bank's twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity (Kadri 2016). The indicators missed the growing popular dissatisfaction with the quality of government services, including lack of job opportunities in the formal sector, unavailability of affordable housing, poor quality public services, and the lack of government accountability (Ianchovichina et al. 2015). Three decades of neoliberal policies had also quietly contributed to the progressive deterioration of economic conditions in the MENA region (Bogaert 2013; Hinnebusch 2015). An analysis of these material factors and resource distributions can help us understand resilience vis-à-vis larger political processes.

Resilience might be fostered by local attempts to diversify the economy and make people more reliant on endogenous agricultural and industrial activities as well as by existing aid programs. In Libya, for instance, the absence of a clear legislative framework regulating land-rights and properties (Fitzgerald and Megerisi 2015) might be an impediment to both effective governance and social resilience. In contrast, the EU's decision to lift taxes on the import of Tunisian olive oil (Ghamni 2016) may help boost the local economy. Such decisions, however, require a clear understanding of the political specificities of those countries and need to be undertaken in a spirit of reciprocity (Bicchi 2014). Economic and material factors are also directly relevant to understanding CO dynamics and effects. The presence of professional associations (e.g., trade unions) positively affects the resilience of societies in the SN. For instance, the strong tradition of workers' movements in Tunisia allowed the country to experience a less violent transition from the former regime to the present one (Allinson 2015). This, however, does not suggest divorcing the political economy of the Arab world from that of the rest of the world. Rather, as Hanieh (2014, 2018) also argues, it remains crucial to understand how the movement of capital beyond its national boundaries affects people's everyday lives.

Material factors and resources also relate to external configurations of CO, both as a lever in contestation/competition between orders and as a variable mediating the

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risk of these contests escalating into conflict. In Libya, the UN has documented how armed groups across the country have built their military forces through the support of foreign countries (United Nations 2017). Nowadays, many local militias rely heavily on the circulation of weapons for financial sustainability. The smuggling of weapons has consequently spread to many surrounding countries – from Syria to Mali – through black market sales to terrorist groups, insurgents, and other criminal entities. This in turn incites clashes and governance breakdowns (Strazzari and Zampagni 2018), prolonging unhealthy and violent dynamics in the SN. In such cases, it might be worth investigating whether attempts to disarm people can be fostered at the local level.

Hypotheses:

Societies will be more able to cope with the risks of conflict and governance breakdown emanating from ALS/CO:

(i)   the more diversified the economy, and

(ii)   where profit is not generated from economic activities related to conflict dynamics.

Empirical Questions:

- How can domestic resources and economics be fostered as sources of resilience?
- Does external support (with money and weapons) contribute to turning violence into a key element of economic and political practices, and if so, how?
- To what extent does the provision of funds and arms lower resilience and contribute to the production of structural inequalities (Duffield 2007; CADTM 2018)?

6. RESEARCHING CONDITIONS FOR STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

The EN – i.e., the six countries of the EU's Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine – is generally considered more resilient than the SN (Gaub and Popescu 2017: 93). Nevertheless, as the Ukraine crisis dramatically demonstrated, the intersection in the region of dysfunctional governance and external geopolitical pressure has the potential to escalate ALS and CO into governance breakdowns and violent conflicts. Policy debates on strengthening resilience in the EN tend, however, to focus overly on proofing its political and economic systems from external influence (namely that of Russia). While this is certainly crucial given Russia's role in sponsoring both ALS and CO in the region, such a focus tends to overlook important aspects of state and societal resilience as well as to disregard the agency of local actors in bringing about reforms. Thus, there

is a need for deeper empirical inquiry into the conditions for strengthening resilience in the EN – i.e., both its current level and the specific factors and actors likely to increase it.

6.1 Contextualizing Resilience in the Eastern Neighbourhood

Following EU-LISTCO's understanding of resilience – which, as emphasised above, is based on the EUGS – analysing the conditions in which resilience can be fostered in the EN implies characterizing the types of 'internal and external crisis' with which states and societies of the region are confronted and identifying the factors affecting their 'abilities to reform'.

6.1.1 Resilience to What: Risks Emanating from ALS/CO

In the EN, the clearest ALS are the so-called 'frozen conflicts'; a contested term for de facto independent territories that are disputed or that have broken away from the state, often along ethno-cultural lines, and as a consequence of the collapse of the USSR (Bebler 2015; Dembinska and Campana 2017; Lynch 2002; O'Loughlin, Kolossov, and Toal 2014).[1] In affected states, central governments are unable to deliver public goods or implement rules in these territories and do not control the means of violence, while the separatists generally receive military and economic support from Russia. Every state in the region but Belarus is affected by or involved in at least one such conflict. Several authors have described these territories as governance 'black holes', where levels of corruption, smuggling, and poverty run particularly high (Cornell 2017; De Waal 2018c). In studying the conditions under which these low-intensity territorial conflicts are likely to escalate into high-intensity conflicts or inter-state war, experts point to dynamics of internal security dilemmas and to political decisions taken in this context (Welt 2010).[2] Thus, fostering resilience against the risks and negative externalities flowing from these territorial conflicts implies supporting external and local governance providers (i.e., other than the central states) and developing economic and societal links with the break-away territories (De Waal 2018a) while also seeking to defuse internal security dilemmas.

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[1] The term 'frozen conflict' is disputed as these conflicts are far from dormant and some continue to generate human casualties.

[2] In the case of the Russo-Georgia war, for instance, it was the decision of the Saakashvili government to attack Tsinvali on the 7th of August 2008, and Moscow's orchestrated provocations before – and disproportionate military reaction to – the attack, that led the frozen conflict in South Ossetia to escalate into an inter-state war (Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia 2009; Kofman 2018; Toal 2017).

Hypotheses:

ALS are less likely to escalate into violent conflict when:

(i)   populations of the break-away region maintain societal, economic and cultural links with those of the central state, and;

(ii)   internal and external security dilemmas are low.

In the EN, risks emanating from CO pertain, internally, to struggles among rent-seeking elites or between these elites and societies demanding accountability and, externally, to the region-building (or structural power) competition between the EU and Russia. The former dynamic has caused several political crises to escalate into mass civil unrest, sometimes qualified as 'colour revolutions' (Finkel and Brudny 2012; Kalandadze and Orenstein 2009; Stewart 2009). The latter has exacerbated internal polarizations in the countries concerned and prompted coercive actions on the part of Russia (Cadier 2015). While these internal and external CO are more likely to escalate into security crises when combined and mutually reinforcing, the respective dynamics, impacts, and pre-eminence of the internal and external aspects of CO need to be distinguished and untangled in the empirical analysis. In the case of the Ukraine conflict, for instance, the lack of public consent for the Yanukovych regime and the weakness of Ukraine's state structures were decisive contextual factors. On the one hand, the fall of the Yanukovych regime was a tipping point that prompted Russia's military intervention in Crimea and the Donbas and caused EU-Russia geo-economic competition to escalate into a geopolitical conflict (Allison 2014; Cadier 2014). On the other, both the security and governance vacuum opened by the collapse of the Party of Region's power structures in the East and the degenerating and corrupt state of Ukraine's security apparatus (i.e., the intelligence services, the army) have allowed pro-Russian networks and agents to escalate local opposition to the Maidan protests into armed rebellion (Toal 2017). Hence, strengthening resilience in such a context would have meant reinforcing consent to public order as well as state (or governance) structures. Yet a focus on geopolitical competition has, at times, led the EU and its member states to misread domestic political upheaval and even take measures detrimental to resilience (Cadier 2019) – as when the EU seemed ready to lower its governance reform standards to lock in the Yanukovych government and avoid it turning to Russia (Youngs 2017).

Hypotheses:

Situations of internal and external CO are more likely to escalate into governance breakdown and violent conflict when:

(i)   internal and external dynamics reinforce one another;

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(ii)   consent to public order is low, and;

(iii)   state and governance structures are weak.

6.1.2 Resilience of What: Political and Social Conditions

Most of the countries of the EN – i.e., Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and, to a lesser extent, Armenia – can be described as 'hybrid political regimes', while Belarus and Azerbaijan can be characterised as autocratic states (Gaub and Popescu 2015). Hybrid political regimes generally combine democratic constitutional arrangements and competitive political processes with non-democratic governance practices (Diamond 2002; Knott 2018; Levitsky and Way 2010; Stewart et al. 2013). In the EN, such regimes tend to limit citizens' access to political and economic resources (Ademmer et al. 2018) and to feed societies' distrust of regular politics' ability to deliver better governance. Over the last two decades, this has led domestic political struggles to escalate into mass protests and civil unrest; in Georgia in 2003 and 2007, in Ukraine in 2004 and 2014, in Moldova in 2009, and in Armenia in 2017.[3] State capture, economic oligarchy, and endemic corruption have been central features of hybrid political regimes in the EN, and key factors both in impeding democratic governance and in feeding citizens' grievances against the public order.

Empirical questions:

- How can societal resilience be strengthened under hybrid political regimes?

- How does state capture affect states and societies' abilities to reform?

To strengthen resilience and foster desirable social and political conditions in the EN, external actors can support and encourage states and societies' abilities to reform. Academic studies generally focus on the contextual factors favouring or impeding reforms, emphasizing the role of local elites' preferences, calculations, and strategies in driving policy change and in responding to external stimuli (Ademmer et al. 2016; Langbein and Börzel 2015; Lavenex 2014; Tolstrup 2014). By contrast, they find little correlation between governance reforms and either levels of democracy or EU integration prospects (Gaub and Popescu 2015; Langbein and Börzel 2013). Regarding democracy, a frequently cited example is Georgia under Saakashvili, which conducted its most successful public policy reforms at a time where the executive had accumulated power beyond democratic standards (Nodia 2018). Regarding EU integration, a key case is Armenia, which responded favourably to EU

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[3]   Experts tend to characterize new domestic political crises of this kind as "inevitable" and at risk of becoming "more violent" (see Gaub and Popescu 2015: 42).

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stimuli for sectoral reforms in several issue areas despite its membership of the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) (Delcour and Wolczuk 2015). Finally, the impact of Russia's actions and influence on governance reforms is not completely clear: it has hampered reforms in some instances but favoured them in others, albeit indirectly (Ademmer 2016; Ademmer and Börzel 2013; Langbein 2013; Tolstrup 2014).

Hypothesis:

> External actors are more likely to be successful in pushing for governance reforms when policy or institutional change fit the political calculations of gate-keeping elites.

Empirical question:

- What are the effects of Russia's actions and influence on governance reforms?

Societal resilience more broadly is likely to be contingent on social cohesion and the management of salient ethnic, cultural and religious cleavages. In the EN, such cleavages are mainly apparent in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. The intervention of external actors (Russia first and foremost) and certain domestic political decisions have contributed to exacerbating tensions, leading to structural polarizations and, at times, CO. Some of the so-called 'frozen conflicts' partly reflect ethnic divisions (e.g., South Ossetia and Abkhazia) though not all do (O'Loughlin et al. 2014). For instance, Gagauz separatism is based on ethnic claims while Transnistrian separatism is not (Parmentier 2014). Yet, it is Transnistria that seceded from Moldova's central state (becoming an ALS) while the Gagauz minority negotiated autonomy within the state of Moldova. The region-building competition between Russia and the EU has foregrounded these internal divisions, with the two aforementioned Moldovan provinces declared themselves in favour of joining the EEU while the central government in Chisinau was pursuing an Association Agreement with the EU (Parmentier 2014). It should also be noted that breakaway regions in the EN are themselves rarely homogenous: Abkhazia and Transnistria are, for instance, ethnically and culturally diverse. Similarly, in the conflict-torn Donbas, "mixed Ukrainian-Russian identities are significant and counterbalance ethnification and polarization induced by the war" (Sasse 2017: 1).

In Ukraine and several other EN countries, polarizations have crystalized less around ethnicity that around language. Empirical studies investigating the role of ethnic identity in shaping attitudes and affecting societal resilience should therefore distinguish the following four elements: individual language preference, language embeddedness, ethnolinguistic identity, and nationality (Onuch and Hale 2018). The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has had a differentiated effect on these various components: a study on the Donbas finds, for instance, that the self-reported

polarization of identities has been accompanied by a preservation of civic identities and that the strengthening of Ukrainian ethno-linguistic identification does not necessarily lead to abandoning bilingual practices (Sasse and Lackner 2018). By contrast, in the rest of Ukraine, the conflict in the Donbas has impacted the local population's ethnolinguistic identifications, language use, and language policy preferences (Kulyk 2018), and certain legislative acts passed (or under consideration) by the central government have contributed to the "securitization of the language issue" (Sasse 2018).

Hypothesis:

> The higher the polarizations around ethno-linguistic identifications and language practices in ALS, the lower will be the social cohesion and societal resilience.

Empirical question:

- How does the securitization of language issues affect state resilience in the post-Soviet space?

In addition, case studies will need to review the potential of local actors in the EN to strengthen resilience, i.e., to assess whether and which actors beyond the state can serve as functional equivalents in providing public goods and services (e.g., religious leaders, companies, international organizations). In particular, understanding religious organizations' potential to perform such functions in the EN requires unpacking their intertwinement with politics and nationalism. For instance, referring to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's (UOC) request to be granted autocephaly by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and in the face of opposition by the Moscow Patriarchate, some analysts argue that "autocephaly is a double-edged sword in times of conflict", and that it is "highly unlikely to deliver the peace-making effect on society" that many hope for (Elsner 2018). Others have pointed to the Georgian Orthodox Church's support for the illiberal tendencies of the Ivanishvili government (Gordzadze 2014) or to the role the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia's conservative foreign policy turn (Petro 2018).

Empirical question:

- Which local non-state actors show potential for resilience in the EN?

6.2 Strengthening Resilience in the Eastern Neighbourhood

6.2.1 Social Trust

Social trust can be fostered by increasing horizontal and/or vertical trust (see 4.1.1). In the EN, societal cohesion (or lack thereof) affects horizontal trust while hybrid

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political regimes and their corollaries in terms of governance practices undermine vertical trust. For external actors, strengthening social trust in the EN implies overcoming or at least defusing the negative externalities of these specific contexts. Comparing social trust levels in several post-Soviet countries over an interval of 10 years, Sapsford et al. (2015) find a correlation between societal trust (or trust in people) and certain identifiable contextual factors. First, countries that are more successful economically – indexed here by GDP, growth rates, poverty levels, and perceptions of household economies – tend to display higher levels of social trust. Second, social trust tends to be lower in countries that score low on the following political indicators: perceptions of freedoms of speech, movement and association, trust in the institutions of control (courts, police, and army), satisfaction with how democracy is developing, and satisfaction with the action of the government. Third, countries with low social cohesion – i.e., with pronounced ethnic, cultural, and linguistic divisions and without a well-established set of norms and expectations about how the society will function – tend to display lower levels of social trust. Strengthening social trust in such contexts thus involves considering and addressing these economic, political, and societal conditions, while bearing in mind that it is less the actual conditions and more the citizens' perceptions of them that matter.

Hypotheses:

The level of social trust will be higher where:

    (i) a state is economically successful;

    (ii) citizens have positive perceptions of freedoms and satisfaction with the action of the government, and;

    (iii) there are high levels of social cohesion.

Empirical Questions:

- How can horizontal trust be strengthened across ALS and the rest of the country?
- How can societal cohesion be strengthened in the EN?

6.2.2 Institutional Design

In the EN, the design and functioning of political and governance institutions is largely tributary to the nature of political regimes (hybrid or autocratic) and to elite network dynamics (state capture and oligarchy). Hybrid political regimes in the EN combine formal democratic rule with authoritarian governance. While rule-making institutions generally allow for competitive political processes and open elections, they cannot be said to channel citizens' voices in the political process in an efficient and negotiated manner. More than by programmatic politics, this process is

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characterised in the EN by patronal politics – i.e., by the selective application of personalised material reward and coercion by hierarchical patronage networks (Hale 2015). Constitutional structures and elections affect the management of political and economic resources, not by providing guiding principles or channelling citizens demands, but by affecting elites' expectations about the future distribution of power (Hale 2015: 70–77). More generally, oligarchic networks tend to capture state institutions, monopolize economic resources, feed corruption patterns, and block reforms (Konończuk et al. 2018). They notably feed a partial reform equilibrium by "blocking further advances in reform that would correct the very distortions on which their initial gains were based" (Hellman 1998: 233). Thus, in the EN, informal practices and elites' expectations and preferences condition institutional reforms and capacity development (Aliyev 2017) and thereby external actors' abilities to strengthen that component of resilience.

Hypotheses:

> The more oligarchic networks capture state institutions and monopolize economic resources:
>
> > (i) the less flexibility institutions will have to adapt to changing conditions, and;
> >
> > (ii) the less external actors will be able to push for reforms towards flexible institutional design.

Empirical Questions:

- How can resilience and institutional designs be strengthened in a context where informal practices are important for household economies?
- How do elite expectations affect institutional capacity development?

6.2.3 Legitimacy

The political and social conditions prevailing in the EN and described above affect the various aspects of governors' legitimacy: patronal regime dynamics skew input legitimacy; state capture undermines throughput legitimacy; non-democratic governance characteristics and practices of hybrid political regimes weaken output legitimacy; and ethnic, cultural, and linguistic polarizations impact traditional legitimacy.

Governors' legitimacy deficits with regard to input, throughput, and output legitimacy have led to – and been expressed in – mass protests and civil unrest in the region. More than being about a (hypothetical) geopolitical choice between the EU and Russia, the 2014 Maidan revolts were about denouncing a corrupt and unfair

system (Onuch 2014), as were the Spring 2018 Armenia protests (De Waal 2018b). By contrast, traditional legitimacy deficits have fed – or been instrumentalized within – larger scale CO. Populations in the Donbas – whether in the Kyiv-controlled parts or in the self-proclaimed DNR/LNR – tend to express strong distrust of the Ukrainian President and the post-Maidan authorities more generally (Sasse 2017). This does not mean, however, that these populations trust the intervening power or support separatism as such; a majority of these populations – again from both sides of the frontline – favour remaining in Ukraine over integration into Russia (Sasse 2017). In the Kharkiv region, where the population had tended to look eastwards (whether in cultural, economic or geopolitical terms) and was highly distrustful of the Maidan movement and the post-Maidan authorities, legitimacy deficits have not escalated into major instability and violence, as the Kyiv central government managed to strike a deal with local elites regarded as legitimate by a majority of the population (Jarábik and Shapovalova 2018). The corollary of this political pact has been, however, that corrupt local practices have remained in place and that reforms have been forestalled. As such, in Ukraine, "decentralization reforms are not a cure for bad governance in the [current] national and local political context" (Jarábik and Shapovalova 2018).

Hypotheses:

> In hybrid political regimes, patronal politics undermines input, throughput, and output legitimacy and the ability of external actors to strengthen it.

> The traditional legitimacy deficit of central governments is less likely to feed dynamics of governance breakdown and violent conflict when it is compensated by the traditional legitimacy of local elites.

Empirical Question:

- In the EN, do local elites tend to have more legitimacy than national elites?

6.2.4 Material Factors and Resources

In the EN, economic and material conditions are directly affected by the political and social contexts described above and, in particular, by state capture, oligarchic monopolies, pervasive corruption, and lack of structural reforms. EN countries tend to experience high levels of poverty and lack of economic diversification. Their markets are largely dysfunctional; states retain significant influence over business operations, and regulatory frameworks tend to change with governments. Overall, there is a "close link between political power and the control of industrial and financial assets" in EN countries (Charap and Colton 2017: 167).

These local economic and material factors shape ALS in the EN in at least two ways. First, they influence conflict dynamics in the de facto states (or breakaway provinces)

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and, as such, the risks of escalation and the prospects of resolution. In Transnistria, for instance, privatization processes involving actors from the patron state (i.e., Russia) tend to heighten tensions between the rent-seeking interests of the personalistic presidential power of the central state (i.e., Moldova) and that of new owners, and this tends to foster (local) elites' defection (Balmaceda 2013). In addition, several criminal networks retain significant influence in these territories (Molcean and Verstandig 2014; Nilsson 2014), and the effects of this should be investigated empirically. As in the Yugoslav wars, these criminal networks tend to benefit from situations of ALS, while on-going conflicts often do not prevent even legal business transactions. For instance, Ukrainian firms continued to buy coal from the Donbas several years after the outbreak of the conflict, until the central government in Kyiv decided to outlaw trade with entities from these territories and to impose an economic blockade on the region (Varfolomeyev 2017), forcing Ukraine to increase coal imports from Russia.

Second, economic and material conditions affect societal resilience in ALS/CO and beyond. In the countries of the EN, including the post-Soviet de facto states, social trust tends to be lower when poverty levels are high, growth rates are low, and perceptions of household economies are negative (Sapsford et al. 2015). The economic situation is particularly dire in Transnistria, for instance, especially after Russia reduced its subsidies to the province following the outbreak of the conflict in the Donbas and due to its own economic woes. In 2015, the separatist authorities were able to pay only 70% of public sector wages and pensions (EURACTIV 2017). Poor economic results are often a reflection of the fact that separatist authorities tend to sacrifice economic considerations to political objectives. In the case of the Transnistrian ruble, for instance, "the local leadership's pride in having a local currency was made possible at the cost of economic crisis" (Isachenko 2009: 74). As such, external actors aiming to strengthen the economic and material components of resilience in ALS/CO will often involve circumventing local actors' political objectives.

Hypotheses:

Societies are likely to be less able to cope with the risks of governance breakdown and/or conflict emanating from ALS/CO in situations where:

(i)   economic elites from the patron and central states are in direct competition over material and industrial resources, and;

(ii)   criminal networks generate profit from ALS/CO dynamics.

Empirical questions:

- To what extent do economic and material factors mediate the risk of ALS/CO in the EN escalating into conflict?

- How do the influence of criminal networks and the political objectives of separatist actors affect societal resilience in post-Soviet ALS/CO?

Economic and material factors are also directly relevant to understanding the dynamics of internal and external CO, whether in terms of their modalities or effects. On the one hand, because of the peculiar nexus between economic power and political influence prevailing in countries of the EN, economic factors have played an important role in mediating the escalation of domestic political contestation into mass civil protest (the so-called 'colour revolutions') and have featured prominently in regimes' counter-contestation strategies. In the context of these protests, mobilization should be understood less as a struggle between democracy and autocracy and more as "a struggle for power among groups with competing interests and differential resources" (Radnitz 2010: 143). Indeed, Radnitz shows that mass political contestation happened not in countries where populations were the most aggrieved economically but in those that had undergone reforms towards partially de-centralizing the concentration of resources and where a new capitalist class had thereby emerged. These new elites have played a key role in mobilizing and signalling mass discontent and in determining whether opposition protests succeed or fail. Stated differently, countries where some economic pluralism had prevailed since the 1990s and where the set of actors eligible to share state resources was wider (i.e., Georgia or Ukraine) have experienced mass protests leading to regime change, while countries where such pluralism was absent and where resources flew instead to a smaller group that was also running the government (i.e., Belarus or Azerbaijan) did not (Radnitz 2010). This is not to say that states with low economic pluralism are necessarily more stable, as there are other forms of political contestation than mass protests: in Azerbaijan, for instance, political transitions can be particularly perilous due to the risk of heightened factional in-fighting (Radnitz 2012). Rather, the point is to emphasize the role of domestic business elites in mediating domestic political contestation and societal resilience. Finally, economic and material factors also have impact on domestic political contestation where authoritarian governments mobilize them in their regime survival strategies (Fumagalli 2017). The Belarus regime, for instance, relies heavily on targeted distribution of social and monetary benefits (Finkel and Brudny 2012: 8).

On the other hand, material factors and resources also relate to external configurations of CO, both in leveraging order contestation/competition and in mediating the risk of escalation into conflict. Russia's military support to the Donbas

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insurgents is a clear and extreme example of the former aspect. As regards the latter, the EU-Russia geo-economic or region-building competition and the decisions taken by Moscow and Brussels in that context have strained the resilience of countries of the EN to the extent that "financial infusions spurred by the Russia-West regional contest made it much easier for governing elites to postpone structural reform indefinitely" (Charap and Colton 2017: 172).

Hypothesis:

> The more local elites instrumentalize mass discontent in their competition for a state's material resources, the less societies will be able to cope with the risk of conflict emanating from internal CO.

Empirical Questions:

- How does economic pluralism mediate the effects of domestic CO?
- How do business elite competition and regime factional in-fighting affect societal resilience?
- How does EU-Russia geo-economic and region-building competition affect state and societal resilience in the EN?

7. CONCLUSION

When approaching the question of resilience in the EU's neighbourhoods, it is fundamental to have a thorough grasp of the diverse actors that have constituted – and continue to constitute – the societal dynamics of those countries. This paper has shown that, when thinking through the categories of resilience that the ALS/CO conceptual framework provides, there are numerous commonalities between the EN and SN. For instance, strengthening social trust in both neighbourhoods often requires considering and addressing less the actual economic, political, and societal conditions than the citizens' perceptions of them. Furthermore, political regimes in both neighbourhoods often combine formal democratic rule with authoritarian governance, where rule-making institutions generally allow for competitive political processes and open elections but cannot be said to channel citizens' voices in the political process in an efficient and negotiated manner. What instead appears to characterize the institutional design of the neighbourhoods is the selective application of personalised material reward and coercion by hierarchical patronage networks. In such a situation, where oligarchic networks and armed groups capture state institutions and monopolize access to resources, societies appear to be less capable of developing healthy and long-term mechanisms of resilience. Similarly, in areas of prolonged conflict, like Syria, Libya, and Yemen, while military control of

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territories remains a key element for the survival/resilience of some state and non-state actors, mechanisms of co-optation and nepotism also allow certain elites/intermediaries to maintain or consolidate their power. Another similarity between the neighbourhoods is the key role of material resources/factors in resilience, as most EN and SN countries experience high levels of poverty, rising unemployment, and a lack of economic diversification. These insights suggest that, due to the close link between political power and the control of industrial and financial assets, the improvement of the economic conditions and the provision of incentives are key elements when seeking to promote societal resilience.

The most important contribution of this paper adds to the conceptual framework is the focus on the role of international/external actors and how they contribute to both the emergence of ALS/CO as well as to resilience. Thus, while it is important to identify the historical and political specificities of those countries and regions, it should be remembered that ALS and CO interact with and are shaped by external factors. Understanding resilience, therefore, often requires thinking beyond domestic dynamics and into the international sphere and considering how external actors' involvement influences the resilience of local actors and how the latter, in turn, use those dynamics to maintain their power at the local level. For instance, local actors searching for legitimacy can appeal to international ones while ignoring accountability to local constituencies. Hence, strengthening resilience in such situations can entail reinforcing both local and external governance structures, as these can be closely related. In addition, the focus on geopolitical competition has – at times – led the EU and its member states to misinterpret domestic political upheaval, resulting in the hasty formulation of measures that have been detrimental for resilience more broadly, as happened in Ukraine and Libya.

Overall, we validate the applicability of EU-LISTCO's conceptual framework (Börzel and Risse 2018) across the neighbourhoods. While a clear understanding of the political specificities of EN and SN countries is required, the EU should nevertheless aim to identify measures of resilience that can be undertaken in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual benefit.

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