



Mapping threats to peace and democracy worldwide

Normandy Index
2024



STUDY

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In the context of the war in Ukraine, the increasingly global effects – material and political – of war make measuring a view of the level of threats to peace, security and democracy around the world all the more important. The 'Normandy Index' has presented an annual measurement of these threats since the 2019 Normandy Peace Forum. The results of the 2024 exercise suggest the level of threats to peace is the highest since the index began, confirming declining trends in global security resulting from conflict, geopolitical rivalry, growing militarisation and hybrid threats. The findings of the 2024 exercise draw on data compiled in 2023-2024 to compare peace – defined on the basis of a given country's performance against a range of predetermined threats – across countries and regions. Derived from the Normandy Index, 63 individual country case studies provide a picture of the state of peace in the world today.

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The Normandy Index is also available in an [online version](#). The present paper was finalised in July 2024. It updates and expands the [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#), [2022](#) and [2023](#) editions of the Normandy Index, all available on the European Parliament's website.

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Foreword



This year has been marked by increased instability, political polarisation and a decline in global peace. While these are worrying trends, there is a silver lining: never before has Europe been so politically engaged in mitigating the devastating effects of conflict and in building solidarity and hope. We entered the year with an increase in our common efforts to support and sustain Ukraine's defence against the continued illegal Russian aggression. The European Union has not only provided almost one hundred billion euros in financial and military aid to Kyiv, it has also opened accession negotiations with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, with the strongest of support from the European Parliament. Similarly, in the Western Balkans, we have moved forward with the opening of accession negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Faced with a wide spectrum of threats to peace and democracy, the European Union has engaged in diplomacy and increased its cooperation with like-minded partners in the G7, in the UN, in NATO and in other regional

organisations, to build partnerships and develop policies to create future conditions for peace. A common European capacity and leadership to act in the current geopolitical environment is what our citizens expect from us. The results of the European elections have only reinforced this message and responsibility.

It is important to note that this year's edition of the Normandy Index coincides with the 80th anniversary of the Normandy landings; a fitting reminder of the extraordinary sacrifices undertaken for freedom and peace in Europe. My hope is that we will find both the innovation and political will needed to promote sustainable peace – meaning, peace with human dignity, peace with freedom and peace with justice. We must remain vigilant not to repeat historical errors of the past, and to avoid falling for any of the false promises of populism and nationalism, which only serve as crucial reminders of how fragile our peace and democracy can be if we do not stand up for them together.

Roberta Metsola

President of the European Parliament

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1. Pursuing peace in a more connected, contested and complex world

The European Union's foreign policy has long been the subject of varied and contested academic debate – on subjects ranging from the Union's capacity and legitimacy to act, to its need for a strategy, vision and objectives. In response, in part, to some of those questions, the 2016 Global Strategy, launched by the then High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) Federica Mogherini,¹ set out a structured and coherent vision for European Union (EU) foreign policy in an increasingly complex geopolitical and socioeconomic global environment. Building on the provisions of the founding Treaties of the EU – and more specifically the Treaty of Lisbon – the Global Strategy raises the EU's level of ambition as a foreign policy actor in pursuit of the objectives defined in the Treaty. Key among those is the pursuit of peace, both in the EU and globally.

While the Global Strategy is not a classic threat assessment exercise, its approach captures a number of threats to global peace and security and goes beyond traditional understandings of security by including in those threats traditional and emerging issues that challenge peace. It also draws on the crucial links between developments that hold the potential to exacerbate, catalyse and magnify the threats identified.

In 2020, the EU's 27 Member States (EU-27) undertook the challenge of carrying out the first ever independent joint analysis of the full range of threats and challenges the EU currently faces or might face in the near future, as the first part of the two-year Strategic Compass process. The Compass, which was endorsed by the European Council in March 2022,² aims to guide the EU's strategic culture and sets out an ambitious plan of action with concrete deliverables, aimed at strengthening the EU's security and defence policy by 2030. The Compass's presentation of threats is formulated in four sections: the first describes the return of power politics and the contested multipolar world; the second identifies threats and challenges linked to specific geographical focal points in the world – from China to Latin America; the third lays out emerging and transnational threats; and the fourth and final part concludes with the strategic implications for the EU. Interestingly, the third part, whose substance looks specifically at the types of threats, coincides largely with the categories identified in the Global Strategy, while adding emphasis on emerging and disruptive technologies, health, maritime and space as domains of pronounced threat. It also identifies the weaponisation of natural resources as a threat. As the Global Strategy before it, the threat analysis carried out in the Strategic Compass highlights the interconnectedness of threats and the hybridity of the threat environment. An update of the common threat analysis was carried out in December 2022, to adapt it to the changing strategic and security context, including the global consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. In the coming years, the Strategic Compass envisages regular updates with the support of a reinforced Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity.³ A revised threat analysis is expected in 2025.

Following the logic of the interconnectedness of threats, the Normandy Index, a product of a 2018 memorandum of understanding between the region of Normandy and the European Parliament, aims to provide a holistic picture of the world – regions and countries – through the prism of the pursuit of peace, measured against threats explicitly defined in the Global Strategy. Its objective is to provide a tool to help EU policy-makers design targeted external action instruments. It is

¹ [A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy](#), EEAS, November 2016.

² [A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence](#), Council of the European Union, March 2022.

³ [Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence](#), EEAS, March 2023.

deliberately framed to be concise and easy to understand, in order to serve as a tool for Members to communicate with the wider public – in terms both of understanding threats across the world, and also of providing information about EU external action. The index is a product of a 2018 memorandum of understanding between the region of Normandy and the European Parliament. It complements the regular Peace and Security Outlook produced by the European Parliamentary Research Service.⁴

1.1. Measuring peace

The modern definition of peace refers not only to an absence of war, but also includes elements of wellbeing, social order and justice for individual persons: people demand and expect more from peace.⁵ Peace also encompasses the right to bodily integrity and rights pertaining to moral and cultural values. All humans have the right to life and the right to the means necessary for their development. This positive dimension of peace is difficult to measure as it is a continuum, stretching from inter-state war to positive public perceptions. This continuum includes international violence (i.e. wars, hybrid conflicts) and intra-national violence (i.e. gang or police violence, forced displacements and civil wars).⁶ Therefore, any measure of peace has to take numerous dimensions into account. A 2022 report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), argues that a systems-thinking understanding of peace is needed to understand fundamental issues related to peacebuilding, including 'what version of peace is being built' and how to make it sustainable.⁷ The same paper also posits that 'because of the complexity, mixed methods approaches that use both qualitative and quantitative data, as well as triangulation from multiple sources are important parts of the evidence base for measuring peace impact'.

Another way to measure peace is to consider the level of threats to peace, in order to address them and avoid possible deterioration. Indeed, several states are faced with multiple threats that not only affect peace individually but can also merge to create new challenges – and hybrid threats. In the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its global domino effects, energy insecurity has re-emerged as one of those threats and as a driver of conflict and deterioration in the quality of peace. Furthermore, geopolitical, environmental and cyber threats are also affecting global trade, as demonstrated by the 2022 peak in the KPMG Supply Chain Stability Index.⁸

Recognising the interconnectedness of threats, the rationale behind the Normandy Index is twofold. First, the index focuses on the realm of EU external action, by selecting and measuring those threats perceived as such by the EU, and that EU action aims to tackle, prevent, resolve or address. Second, the Normandy Index aims at monitoring the probability (or existence) of conflict (or destabilisation of peace and security) in a given country on the basis of the aggregate level of these threats.

1.2. Identifying threats and shaping policy: Indices and policy-making

Indices can be used as early-warning systems and are designed to give policy-makers insights into potential risks and developments in economic, social, environmental, security and political factors.

⁴ E. Lazarou, E. Pichon, [Peace and Security in 2023: Overview of EU action and outlook for the future](#), EPRS, European Parliament, July 2023.

⁵ [Declaration on a Culture of Peace](#) adopted at the UNGA 107th plenary, United Nations Digital Library, September 1999.

⁶ M. Caparini, G. Milante, [Sustaining peace and sustainable development in dangerous places](#), SIPRI, 2017.

⁷ E. Brusset, G. Milante, M. Riquier, C. Delgado, [Measuring Peace Impact](#), SIPRI, 2022.

⁸ [KPMG Supply Chain Stability Index](#), KPMG, 2024.

Quantitative indices are also good tools for aggregation and comparison purposes, as well as demonstrating change, evolution and the degree of that evolution in a standardised manner. Depending on their make-up, indices can quantify possibilities of an event occurring in the near/foreseeable future, thus acting as foresight tools. Foresight, as defined in the *Global Trends to 2030* report from the European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS) is 'an intellectual exercise where we imagine different alternatives of the future ... tracing how we end up there'.⁹ In that sense, foresight is a tool to help determine and choose a path for action; it is 'an organising yet selective principle'. Part of the European Commission's stated rationale for embedding strategic foresight into policy-making is 'to build and use collective intelligence to anticipate developments and prepare for new opportunities and challenges earlier and more effectively'.¹⁰ Composite indicators (or indices) can bring together this collective intelligence to provide policy-makers with 'the big picture', crucial in shaping policy.

An index can also offer a comprehensive overview of a situation made up of a basket of contributing factors. Existing indices relating to peace and security present differing versions of such baskets, taking selected variables into account to build their measurements of conflict and peace. Some function as conflict trackers, focusing specifically on the prevention of deadly violence and its particular relevance for a region or country's foreign policy.¹¹ Others aim to be broadly informative about the levels of a multitude of factors, such as societal safety and security, domestic and international conflict and degree of militarisation. A third category, which incorporates the Fragile States Index (FSI) ranking, highlights areas of vulnerability contributing to the risk of state fragility. The limits to policy implementation are naturally marked in terms of resources, time and politics. Yet, even in hindsight, indices can provide an understanding of the elements that contributed to a policy response's adequacy to face critical events. For example, well before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Global Health Security Index indicated limited global capacity to deal with a large scale epidemic or pandemic and that all countries had important gaps to address in health security.

Overall, these data-sets and indicators aim to measure the comparative level of pre-defined variables across a region or the world; to make political risk assessments for the future; and to contribute to the work of policy-makers and other foreign policy actors. The vision of the Normandy Index is to perform these functions in the service of EU foreign policy, in a way that is consistent with its objectives and aims. This is particularly timely, given new challenges and opportunities, such as requests by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, to become EU members, and consequent designation of new candidate and pre-candidate countries in June 2022. Parliament's President Roberta Metsola has remarked that 'enlargement is the Union's strongest geopolitical tool. And especially in this new geostrategic environment, an enlarged EU that is based on clear objectives, criteria and merit, serves as an investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity on the European continent. It is a process with an outcome that benefits everyone involved'. In addition, knowledge of the countries in the EU's immediate neighbourhood provides additional information for decision-makers and can certainly facilitate European integration of these countries and further cooperation with southern and eastern neighbours. Beyond the EU neighbourhood, the Normandy Index provides a clear and strategic vision of global policy developments, using cross-cutting geographic and sectoral approaches.

⁹ [Global Trends to 2030](#), European Strategy and Policy Analysis System (ESPAS), April 2019.

¹⁰ [Strategic Foresight Report](#), European Commission, September 2020.

¹¹ [Global Conflict Tracker](#), Council on Foreign Relations, 2023.

2. The Normandy Index

The Normandy Index differs from other indices in that it adopts an approach tailored by and to EU action. It also defines conflict and the numerous stages between perfect peace and total war as a product of factors linked to the main threats identified by the EU in its external action strategy. The EU Global Strategy identifies the following 11 threats as the main current challenges to peace and security.¹²

terrorism	hybrid threats	economic crises	climate change
energy insecurity	violent conflicts	cybersecurity	disinformation
fragile states	trans-border crime	weapons of mass destruction (WMDs)	

The index uses 9 of these 11 threats as factors assigned equal weight in the final result for 138 United Nations (UN) countries (with the EU-27 counted as one). A major innovation is to blend geopolitical indicators with economic and social data. Trends towards inflation, trade and energy disruption, as well as weaker economies, already seen since 2021, continued in 2023-2024. Some currencies, such as the Turkish lira or Egyptian pound attained historic lows. Global gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed in 2022 to 3.2 %, more than 1 percentage point weaker than expected at the end of 2021, mainly weighed down by Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine. Following 2.6 % growth in 2023, a sub-trend global growth of 2.8 % is anticipated for 2024.¹³ General government gross debt to GDP has also increased on the long-term trajectory: from 73.2 % in 2013, to 112.4 % in 2023 for advanced economies; emerging and developing economies debt increased from 49.7 % to 67.5 % (International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2023).

The Normandy Index therefore now encompasses three composite indicators: energy insecurity, economic crisis and crime. On crime, while no solid dataset measuring trans-border crime on a global scale is currently available, the level of criminality in the 138 entities measured is assessed by means of a component indicator consisting of a global measurement of organised crime: the number of homicides (75 % of the composite indicator) and an indicator on perceptions of criminality (25 %).

The hybrid threats category is excluded from the Normandy Index, as hybrid threats are, by their very nature, multi-faceted, comprising a combination of factors (see Figure 1). The index therefore assesses hybrid threats indirectly by examining the accumulation of their various dimensions (energy insecurity, economic crises, disinformation, cyber-attacks). In its online version, the Normandy Index allows the user to view a ranking of the 138 entities based on the basket of threats that together constitute 'hybrid'.¹⁴ Quantifying or even estimating the level of disinformation in a given country remains a contentious issue among specialists, as new knowledge about this field continues to be generated. For this reason, the initial version of the Normandy Index used a measure of 'press freedom' in its place, in spite of the recognition that the media landscape is merely one of many factors affecting resilience to disinformation. Data on the spread of misleading views and false information by governments and political parties have become available through the Varieties of

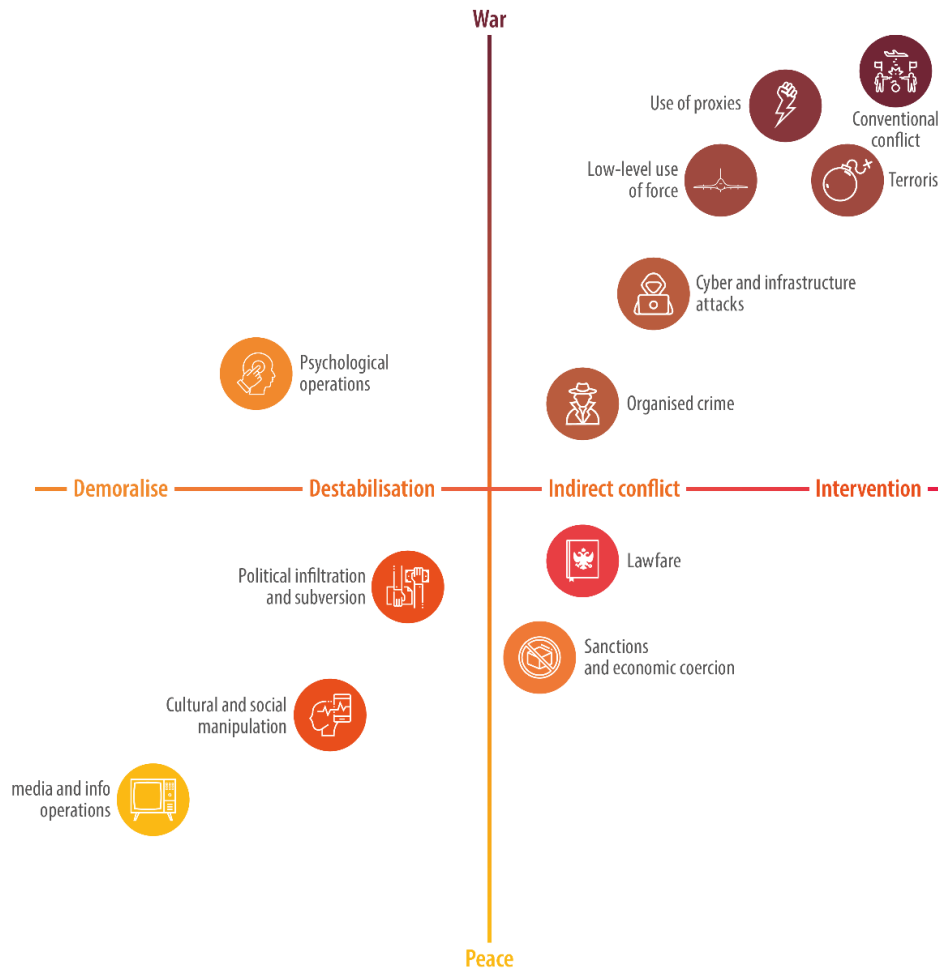
¹² Note that these same threats are also included in the 2022 Strategic Compass threat analysis, with only one difference: the indicator 'transborder crime' is labelled as 'organised crime'.

¹³ P. S. Diop, V. Remy, [Economic Outlook – A sub-trend global growth, but no recession](#), EY, February 2024.

¹⁴ [Normandy Peace Index](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2023.

Democracy (VDEM) project. While not exhaustive of all sources of disinformation, the Normandy Index uses data collected by VDEM to measure the disinformation threat.¹⁵

Figure 1 – Means of hybrid warfare



Source: CEPA, 2021.

To the above 10 factors, the Normandy Index adds the quality of the democratic process, as democracy support is a core dimension of EU external action. In addition, there is a strong correlation between weak democratic processes and threats to peace and security. Given the complex and multidimensional nature of the domains, the methodology chosen for the Normandy Index is based on the selection of key representative indicator(s) for each domain, based on current academic and policy literature and the available data.

¹⁵ Note that the 2022 Normandy Index has been retroactively calculated to include new indicators on economic crises (public debt to GDP) as well as a more precise calculation of other indicators, such as energy insecurity (through calculation of annual electric power consumption per capita). For more on the methodological approach, see the annex to this study.

Table 1 – Summary of domains, indicators and sources

Domain	Indicators	Definition	Source	Number of countries covered	Latest year of data
Climate change	INFORM Global Risk index	INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters.	United Nations	191	2024
Cybersecurity	Cybersecurity Index	The Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) is a survey measure capturing the commitment of Member States to cybersecurity to raise awareness. It is the only open-source cybersecurity index available.	International Telecommunication Union	194	2020
Democratic processes	Participatory democracy index	A measure of the extent that the ideal of participatory democracy achieved within a country.	VDEM	179	2022
Economic crises	Financial vulnerability - Non-performing loans as % of total loans	Nonperforming loans to total gross loans ratio is calculated by using the value of nonperforming loans (NPLs) as the numerator and the total value of the loan portfolio as the denominator. It is often used as a proxy for asset quality.	World Bank	143	2022
	Central government debt, total (% of GDP)	Central government debt, total (% of GDP)	International Monetary Fund	135	2024
Energy insecurity	Energy imports	Energy imports, net (% of energy use). Banded to be 0 if country is a net exporter of energy.	World Bank	143	2022
	Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)	Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)	World Bank	142	2019
Fragile states	Fragile States Index	The Fragile States Index (FSI) is an annual ranking of 178 countries based on the different pressures they face that impact their levels of fragility. The index is based on The Fund for Peace's proprietary Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST) analytical approach. Based on comprehensive social science methodology, three primary streams of data – quantitative, qualitative, and expert validation – are triangulated and subjected to critical review to obtain final scores for the FSI.	Fund For Peace	179	2022
Crime	Homicide rate per 100 000	Homicide rate per 100 000 – used as a proxy for crime	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	192	2021
	Perceptions of criminality banded	Responses to the Gallup question 'Do you feel safe walking alone'	Gallup/IEP	163	2023
Resilience to disinformation	Resilience to disinformation	A measure of how often domestic and foreign governments and political parties use social media and advertising to spread disinformation within the country.	VDEM	179	2022
Terrorism	Global Terrorism Index	A composite score in order to provide an ordinal ranking of countries on the impact of terrorism. The impact of terrorism includes incidents, deaths, injuries, and property damage caused by terrorism.	Institute for Economics and Peace	163	2024

Domain	Indicators	Definition	Source	Number of countries covered	Latest year of data
Violent conflict	Conflict sub-indicators of the Global Peace Index	Worst score of the following indicators from the Global Peace Index: (1) Intensity of internal conflict, (2) Deaths from internal conflict, (3) Number of internal conflicts, (4) Intensity of external conflict, (5) Deaths from external conflict	Institute for Economics and Peace	163	2023
WMD	Nuclear Threat Index	The Nuclear Threat Index assesses countries' progress on nuclear security, highlights security gaps, and recommends actions for governments to better protect nuclear materials and facilities and build an effective global nuclear security architecture.	Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU)	176	2023

Source: Institute for Economics and Peace, EPRS, 2024.

The Normandy Index is therefore a tool EU policy-makers may use to assess countries most at risk in the world according to the EU's Global Strategy, and to target EU action. **It is not a ranking of countries according to their peacefulness, but rather a ranking of specific threats to peace per country.** As new data become available, the Normandy Index evolves in accuracy, geographical spread and precision. In addition, events such as the coronavirus crisis or new armed conflict may cause security strategists around the world to adapt and develop new policy tools when it comes to security and peace. As events unfold, the Normandy Index will adapt as the EU's strategic approach to peace and security evolves, with the potential inclusion of new threats in future versions.

As mentioned earlier, the endorsement of the Strategic Compass and of a new North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Strategic Concept has bolstered European states' capacity in security and defence.¹⁶ In April 2023, Finland became NATO's 31st member, while Sweden became the 32nd member on 7 March 2024. However, not all threats can be confronted with military means alone. Beyond classic defence strategies, the EU consistently aims to develop capabilities to promote peace, security and resilience internally and abroad through an array of policies. The pandemic and war in Ukraine have demonstrated the tools for the preservation of peace go far beyond traditional understandings of security, to include, for example, progress towards a European Health Union, REPowerEU – to counter energy insecurity – and the European defence industrial strategy presented in March 2024 to strengthen the European defence technological and industrial base and achieve defence industrial readiness. The 2023 economic security strategy unveiled by the European Commission in June 2023, also addresses concerns about security and democracy. According to the Commission, the observation that 'risks presented by certain economic linkages are evolving quickly in the current geopolitical and technological environment and are increasingly merging with security concerns' underpins the de-risking spirit of the strategy.

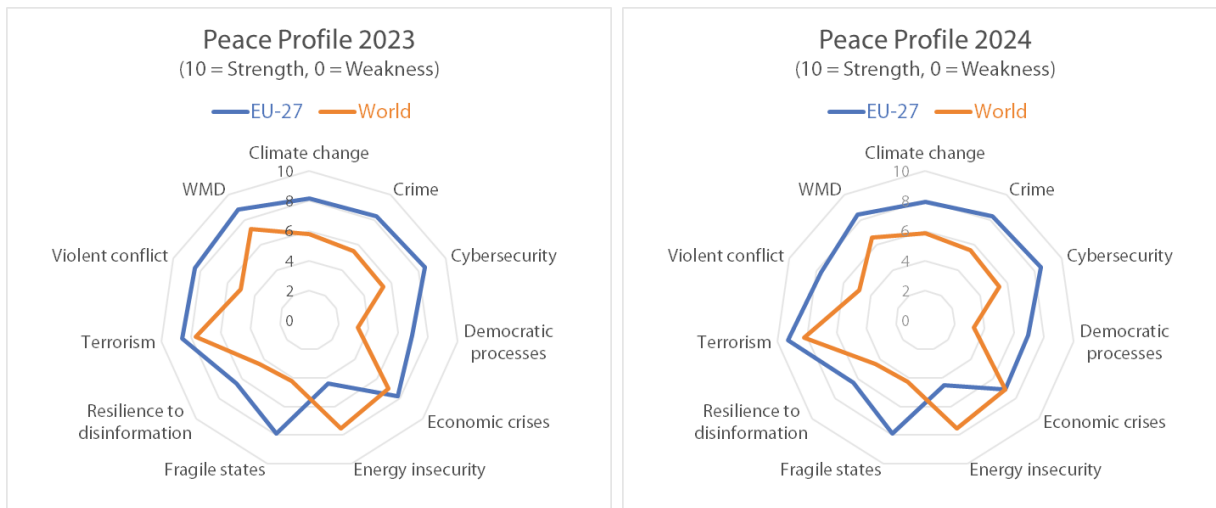
The value of the Normandy Index also lies in its potential to pinpoint the key threats for each country and region it assesses, providing understanding for the policy mix needed to support peace and security in that given area. The online version of the Normandy Index offers comparisons across regions, countries and time, enabling EU policy-makers to grasp which areas need to be given greater consideration when assisting partners worldwide at national and regional levels, while also potentially monitoring improvement (or absence of improvement) in resilience to those threats in countries where the EU is already engaged.

¹⁶ [NATO 2022 Strategic Concept](#), NATO, June 2022.

2.1. The Normandy Index 2024: Findings and functions

For each of the 137 countries and the EU-27, the Normandy Index uses the 11 threats to peace and compares them to the same 11 dimensions for other countries in the same region (or to the world), as the regional environment is assumed to play a major role in countries' resilience to threats.

Figure 2 – EU-27 Peace profile for 2023 and 2024



Source: Normandy Index, 2023 and 2024.

For each dimension, 10 represents no risk and 0 a major threat. In the example shown above (Figure 2), the EU-27 appears less at risk in 9 out of 11 dimensions in 2024, while being more at risk on energy security and at equal risk of economic crisis than the rest of the world. The comparison between the two years indicates that for the EU-27, as opposed to other countries and regions, there is no significant change in the peace profile between the two years. However, geopolitical crisis in the European neighbourhood has affected energy supplies and EU-27 economies, resulting in a fall in the EU-27 global ranking of 3 positions in 2024.

After a slight improvement from 2019 to 2022, the global peace profile (5.74 average in 2023-2024) has also declined in the past year – unsurprisingly given the global destabilising impact of Russia's war on Ukraine (Figure 3). The results of the 2024 exercise suggest that the level of threats to peace in the world is the highest in the five years since the the index began, confirming declining trends in global security resulting from the war, multiple crises and conflicts, geopolitical rivalry, growing militarisation and hybrid threats, including those linked to economic, digital and environmental dimensions.

Figure 3 – World average, 2019-2024

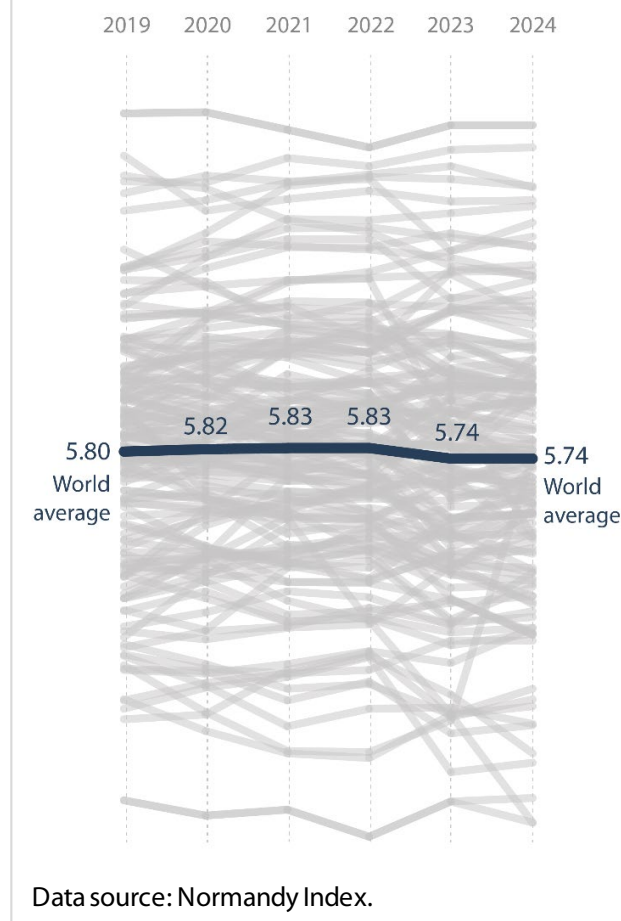


Figure 4 – Highest and lowest scoring countries in 2024

Top 10				Lowest 10			
country	rank 2023	rank 2024	rank change	country	rank 2023	rank 2024	rank change
Switzerland	1	1	→	Mali	130	129	↑
Norway	2	2	→	Iraq	133	130	↑
Australia	4	3	↑	South Sudan	130	131	↓
Iceland	3	4	↓	Yemen	134	132	↑
New Zealand	5	5	→	Somalia	129	133	↓
Canada	6	6	→	Democratic Republic of the Congo	135	134	↑
Singapore	9	7	↑	Chad	128	135	↓
Malaysia	9	8	↑	Central African Republic	136	136	→
South Korea	8	9	↓	Afghanistan	137	137	→
EU-27	7	10	↓	Syria	130	138	↓

Data source: Normandy Index 2023 and 2024.

The launch of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has had an impact on global security and peace: most notably, the global average for energy security has fallen, suggesting that security and energy-related threats have increased. In focusing on the top 10 and lowest 10 scoring countries (Figure 4), it is evident that change is marginal for the highest performers and very slow for lower performers. Countries with the highest score (Switzerland, Norway, Australia) continue to perform well, advancing in a positive feedback loop year by year. Some are less affected by global insecurity and threats also due to an advantageous geographic position (Australia, Island, New Zealand).¹⁷ On the negative side, peace and security in a number of countries, such as Somalia, Chad and Syria, continued to decline in 2024. This indicates that the process of transformation towards peace and security takes place across a longer interval than a single year period, as well as the long impact of negative feedback loops that have tendency to nurture 'global polycrisis'.¹⁸

Figure 5 – Rising or falling behind? Main changes in the 2024 ranking

Top 10 risers				Bottom 10 fallers				
country	rank 2023	rank 2024	rank change	country	rank 2023	rank 2024	rank change	
Azerbaijan	70	34	↑	36	Angola	77	103	↓
Senegal	57	28	↑	29	Zambia	48	68	↓
Madagascar	69	50	↑	19	Tanzania	56	76	↓
Guinea-Bissau	96	77	↑	19	Brazil	73	88	↓
India	112	93	↑	19	The Gambia	41	55	↓
Algeria	83	65	↑	18	Israel	59	71	↓
China	46	32	↑	14	Uganda	97	109	↓
Cameroon	122	110	↑	12	Congo	107	119	↓
Sri Lanka	71	62	↑	9	Papua New Guinea	67	78	↓
Kenya	87	78	↑	9	Gabon	73	84	↓

Data source: Normandy Index 2023 and 2024.

No significant change can be observed among those countries scoring lowest, compared to those that demonstrate high levels of peace and security. The explanation for this could vary: high scorers are by default more resilient and build on their success in a process of positive reinforcement, whereas low scorers may remain stable due to a negative feedback loop that is difficult to overcome through internal reform or external aid. Nevertheless, some countries (Figure 5), such as Azerbaijan, Senegal and Algeria, signal a positive evolution. The source of a rise in the ranking differs for each

¹⁷ R. Kaplan, *Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle against Fate*, Random House, 2012.

¹⁸ [The global risks report 2024](#), World Economic Forum, January 2024.

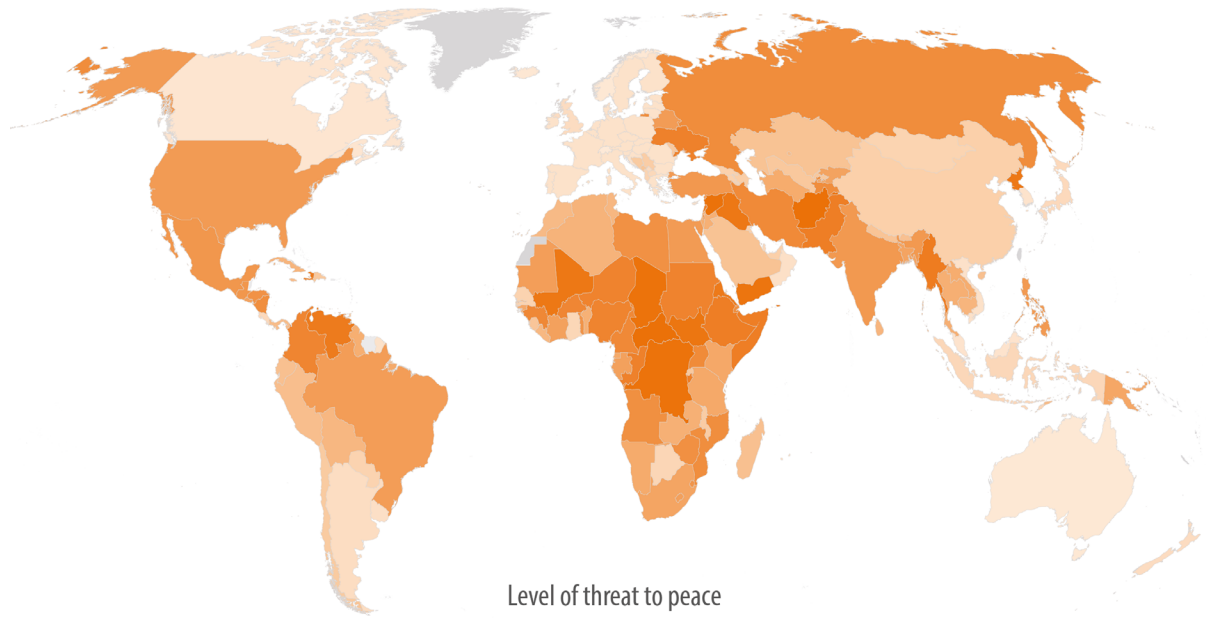
of these countries and the index should be used to examine these in detail. It can sometimes be attributed to peace processes and mediation, or to energy and economic variables, such as increased oil and gas prices for net energy exporters. In other cases, legislation supporting resilience to key threats or improved quality of democracy, may boost an individual country's ranking. This observation further justifies the EU's focus on building resilience, both internally, in its neighbourhood, and beyond. As mentioned above, the Normandy Index ranks the EU itself 3 places lower from 2023 to 2024, suggesting a verifiable impact of multiple security crises in its neighbourhood and associated threats identified by the index, such as higher energy prices or increased central government debt.

Furthermore, some global powers, such as India (+19) and China (+14), manifested resilience in adverse conditions and economic uncertainty, rising in the ranking. Russia's war continues to affect the level of threat to Ukraine. In 2024, Ukraine fell an additional 5 positions, following its 2023 decline of 11 positions. Russia advanced 1 position in 2024 following a 3-rank fall last year. The individual factors that lead to these changes (for example a stark change in a specific indicator or merely a relative lack of change compared to other countries), can be examined through the component indicators on the Normandy Index website, as well as via the 63 examples included in this study.

The interactive online version of the Normandy Index also allows comparison between countries, individual countries and regions and across time. In addition, rankings of countries on the basis of only one or a set of more threats are also available, using the source indicators.¹⁹

¹⁹ [Normandy Peace Index](#), EPRS, European Parliament, 2024.

Figure 6 – Normandy Index, 2024



Level of threat to peace

more at risk					moderate risk					less at risk				
Rank	Country	NI	rank change		Rank	Country	NI	rank change		Rank	Country	NI	rank change	
1	Switzerland	8.58	0		48	Saudi Arabia	6.25	7		93	India	5.31	19	
2	Norway	8.39	0		49	Bhutan	6.24	-10		94	Turkey	5.28	-4	
3	Australia	8.06	1		50	Ecuador	6.23	0		94	Palestine	5.28	0	
4	Iceland	8.05	-1		50	Madagascar	6.23	19		96	Mexico	5.27	-7	
5	New Zealand	7.94	0		52	Peru	6.22	-7		96	Guatemala	5.27	-5	
6	Canada	7.89	0		53	Jamaica	6.21	7		98	Eswatini	5.25	4	
7	Singapore	7.75	2		54	Panama	6.18	-6		99	Togo	5.19	-4	
8	Malaysia	7.63	1		55	The Gambia	6.13	-14		100	Honduras	5.13	0	
9	South Korea	7.55	-1		56	Morocco	6.09	-9		101	Libya	5.11	8	
10	EU-27	7.54	-3		57	Timor-Leste	6.02	-4		102	Zimbabwe	5.08	-4	
11	Vietnam	7.39	2		58	Bahrain	5.99	-5		103	Angola	5.06	-26	
12	Oman	7.34	2		59	Liberia	5.98	-1		104	Djibouti	5.03	0	
13	Uruguay	7.30	-1		60	Bolivia	5.90	-9		105	Nicaragua	4.98	3	
14	Mauritius	7.29	-3		60	Tunisia	5.90	1		106	Mozambique	4.95	-3	
15	Costa Rica	7.26	2		62	Sri Lanka	5.88	9		107	Tajikistan	4.93	-8	
16	Argentina	7.14	5		63	Cuba	5.85	-2		108	Russia	4.81	1	
17	United Kingdom	7.08	-1		64	Cambodia	5.82	-1		109	Uganda	4.79	-12	
18	Kosovo	7.04	0		65	Guyana	5.81	0		110	Iran	4.77	-6	
19	Qatar	7.00	0		65	Algeria	5.81	18		110	Cameroon	4.77	12	
20	Japan	6.98	-5		67	Benin	5.78	-2		112	Guinea	4.72	-6	
21	North Macedonia	6.94	-3		68	Zambia	5.08	-20		113	Burkina Faso	4.70	1	
22	Indonesia	6.88	-1		69	Jordan	5.75	-5		114	Colombia	4.67	1	
23	Ghana	6.79	-4		69	Thailand	5.75	3		115	Nigeria	4.65	5	
24	Kuwait	6.73	4		71	Israel	5.74	-12		116	Sudan	4.57	-5	
25	Botswana	6.70	4			World average	5.74	-2		116	Niger	4.57	3	
26	Albania	6.68	-2		72	Laos	5.73	-5		118	Ukraine	4.52	-5	
27	Mongolia	6.66	-4		73	Turkmenistan	5.72	5		119	Congo	4.50	-12	
28	Senegal	6.59	29		74	Namibia	5.71	6		120	Burundi	4.44	3	
29	Paraguay	6.58	2		75	Equatorial Guinea	5.68	6		121	Lebanon	4.39	0	
30	Georgia	6.52	5		76	Tanzania	5.67	-20		122	Ethiopia	4.30	2	
31	Armenia	6.50	-4		77	Guinea-Bissau	5.65	19		122	Pakistan	4.30	5	
32	United Arab Emirates	6.47	-7		78	Papua New Guinea	5.58	-11		124	Myanmar	4.26	-7	
32	China	6.47	14		78	Kenya	5.58	9		125	Venezuela	4.25	1	
34	Azerbaijan	6.44	36		80	South Africa	5.54	-7		126	Haiti	4.24	-10	
35	Serbia	6.43	-9		80	Bangladesh	5.54	-2		126	Eritrea	4.24	-9	
36	Malawi	6.42	-6		82	Kyrgyzstan	5.50	-6		128	North Korea	4.19	-3	
37	Trinidad and Tobago	6.38	0		82	El Salvador	5.50	4		129	Mali	3.78	1	
38	Chile	6.37	5		84	Gabon	5.47	-11		130	Iraq	3.69	3	
38	Bosnia and Herzegovina	6.37	6		85	Lesotho	5.45	0		131	South Sudan	3.63	-1	
40	Rwanda	6.36	-7		85	Cote d'Ivoire	5.45	6		132	Yemen	5.77	2	
41	Moldova	6.35	-9		87	Mauritania	5.42	4		133	Somalia	3.48	-4	
41	Dominican Republic	6.35	-6		88	Brazil	5.41	-15		134	Democratic Republic of the Congo	3.47	1	
41	Uzbekistan	6.35	0		89	Belarus	5.37	-5		135	Chad	3.23	-7	
44	Sierra Leone	6.33	-10		90	United States	5.36	-9		136	Central African Republic	3.15	0	
45	Montenegro	6.31	-5		90	Egypt	5.36	-2		137	Afghanistan	2.85	0	
46	Nepal	6.31	-8		92	Philippines	5.34	9		138	Syria	2.64	-8	
47	Kazakhstan	6.26	4											

3. The Normandy Index and its relevance for the European Parliament

According to Eurobarometer surveys, the majority of European citizens would like to see increased EU involvement in all policy areas relating to peace and security. The most recent Eurobarometer (April 2024)²⁰ pictures citizens' continued attachment to peace and democratic values. Looking to the future, EU citizens put defence and security (37 %) as one of the first priorities in reinforcing the EU's global position, while energy issues and food security/agriculture follow (both at 30 %). While 4 in 10 citizens say the role of the EU has become more important, 35 % think it has stayed the same and 22 % that it has diminished.

While EU foreign and security policy remains in the intergovernmental sphere to a much larger extent than other policy areas, the Lisbon Treaty contributed to increase the supranational EU institutions' contribution in this area. For the European Parliament, the most relevant provisions relate to consultation, oversight, accountability and budgetary functions. Article 36 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), obliges the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP) to consult Parliament regularly on common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and common security and defence policy (CSDP) matters and to keep Parliament informed of policy developments, requiring that Parliament's views be taken 'duly into consideration'. The European Parliament therefore holds annual debates on the state of play of the CFSP and of the CSDP, on the basis of annual progress reports on their implementation. Parliament also votes on two annual own-initiative reports (INI) on the implementation of the CFSP and CSDP, puts questions to the HR/VP (including through the dedicated Question Time during plenary sessions), and makes recommendations to the HR/VP and to the Council on related matters. Parliament exercises authority in security and defence matters through its function as budgetary authority. Most notably, the Parliament oversees civilian aspects of CSDP financed by the EU budget (Article 41 TEU).

The Normandy Index aims at contributing to the European Parliament's role in foreign policy oversight. It offers Members of the European Parliament a measure of threats to peace throughout the world that is consistent with the EU's Global Strategy and, as has been shown, the Strategic Compass. Consequently, it responds to increased demand for accountability from actors involved in CFSP and CSDP, as well as providing an empirical argument in support of demand for attention to be paid to regions and countries at risk. At a time of growing demand for EU institutions to demonstrate greater legitimacy and transparency, the European Parliament's growing involvement in CFSP has helped increase democratic accountability. Although Parliament's formal powers in CFSP are limited, it nonetheless has growing influence as a 'norm entrepreneur' in human rights and democracy, both through its relationship with the HR/VP and as a diplomatic player through its delegations, mediation activity and parliamentary diplomacy. Importantly, in other areas of policy-making increasingly linked to peace, such as research and artificial intelligence (for example on defence or new technologies) and climate, the European Parliament has the full power to co-legislate.

²⁰ [EP Spring 2024 Survey: Use your vote - Countdown to the European elections](#), European Parliament, April 2024.

4. The added value of case studies

To illustrate the Normandy Index's potential to track peace and security, 63 case studies are set out in the following pages. Each case study includes an analysis of traditional sources of instability and threats to peace, a graphic representation of the situation in the country compared with other countries from the same region, and notable points of interest regarding the country's performance in the ranking. A focus on new sources of insecurity and an analysis of the EU's contribution and assistance in building resilience through its involvement with the country in question completes the picture.

The EU contributes in many ways (development cooperation, support for democracy and human rights, cooperation within the European Neighbourhood or regional cooperation, pre-accession assistance, peacekeeping, trade agreements and now also the provision of military equipment), and varies from country to country, depending on the degree and type of cooperation put in place with the country concerned. The case studies represent key EU partners (strategic partners or trade partners); countries in which the EU operates military or civilian missions; are part of the G20; and those with notable vulnerabilities or achievements on one or more of the Normandy Index variables. New case studies have been added to last year's study.

All case studies are available in interactive form on the Normandy Index website.²¹ The website allows users to produce comparative graphs for each of the 138 entities studied.

²¹ See online version at: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/infographics/peaceandsecurity/index.html>.

Afghanistan

Afghanistan ranks 137th on the Normandy Index. Following the Taliban takeover in August 2021, and the subsequent withdrawal of United States (US) and NATO troops, the country is suffering from widespread instability and economic collapse. The crisis is compounded by the effects of climate change and successive climate-related disasters, and the country is at risk of widespread famine.

Background and key issues

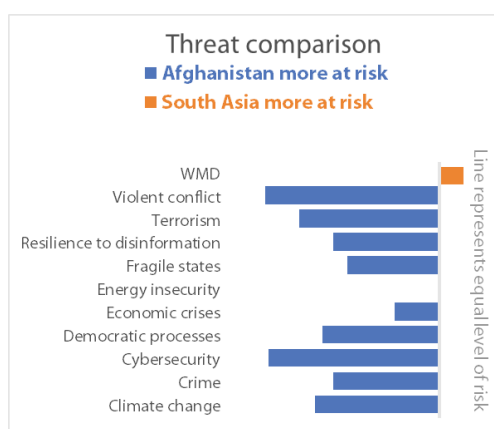
The Cold War saw an unsuccessful and protracted Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, with 10 years of war ending in Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989. Persisting conflict between the Soviet-backed Afghan government and the Mujahedeen led to the [Taliban](#) taking power in 1995, promising to bring peace. The events of 11 September 2001 and the Taliban's response to this attack, reignited an intensely violent conflict in the country, as United States (US) forces invaded in a bid to oust the Taliban. For 20 years, US-backed governments ruled Afghanistan, but following a renewed Taliban takeover of Kabul in August 2021, US and allied NATO forces left the country. No country has recognised the Taliban government, and large sums of Afghan government funds abroad remain frozen. The Afghan economy is in freefall and the political situation has led to a humanitarian crisis considered one of the worst in the world, with an estimated 23.7 million people in [need](#) of humanitarian assistance in 2024. Some 4 in 10 Afghans face acute hunger.



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New security and hybrid threats

Afghanistan increasingly suffers from the effects of climate change and natural disaster, which exacerbate existing tensions. The [2023 Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index](#) ranks it the 12th most vulnerable country to climate change. Since 2018, the country has faced successive climate-related [disasters](#) such as [extreme drought](#) and [flash floods](#), both significant drivers of displacement and food insecurity. In October 2023, three powerful [earthquakes](#) struck the country, affecting 1.6 million people and further [worsening](#) the dire humanitarian situation. Extreme weather, natural disaster and conflict have led to the [internal displacement](#) of more than 5.8 million people since 2012. In 2020, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) estimated that [80%](#) of conflict in Afghanistan concerned land, water and resources. In 2024, with an 81% decline in terrorism deaths during 2023, Afghanistan was the fourth country most impacted by [terrorism](#).



EU involvement

The EU has [supported](#) Afghanistan with development and humanitarian aid for decades, with funding amounting to around €1.7 billion since 1994. Following the return of the Taliban regime in August 2021, the EU has changed the terms of its engagement. While it has ruled out recognising the new Taliban government, the EU [established](#) a minimum presence on the ground in Kabul. The EU has suspended its regular development assistance, but continues to provide humanitarian aid, livelihood and basic needs support, in coordination with international partners. The EU's operational [engagement](#) is conditional on the behaviour of the new Afghan government – measured according to five benchmarks, including the Afghan government commitment that Afghanistan will not serve as a base for the export of terrorism to other countries; and to the respect for human rights, in particular [women's rights](#), the rule of law and freedom of the media.

Albania

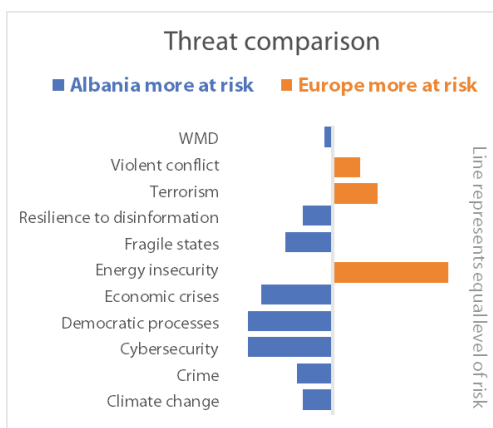
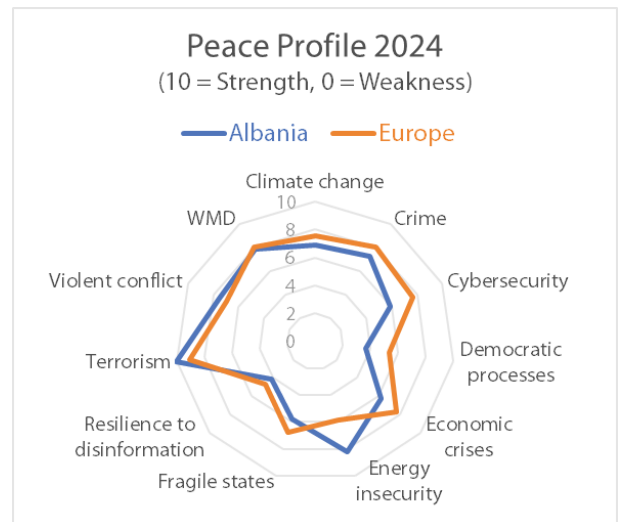
Albania ranks 26th on the Normandy Index. Since the end of the Balkan Wars in the early 1990s, the country has made significant progress on political and economic reforms, to the extent that it joined NATO in April 2009, and opened talks with the EU on accession in March 2020. Albania is a clear example of religious tolerance and diversity. Despite this, the country still faces significant economic and democratic hurdles, as well as challenges linked to democratic processes.

Background and key issues

Enmeshed in the Balkan Wars of 1990 to 1993, Albania continued to suffer from [domestic civil unrest](#), which erupted in 1997 in the 'pyramid crisis', alongside military involvement in the Kosovo conflict against Serbia. Albania is also a hub for organised crime, with one of the highest human-trafficking rates in Europe. The clandestine nature of human trafficking, however, means that Albania lacks reliable [data](#) on the phenomenon. Nevertheless, Eurostat has ranked Albania among the top 10 countries in terms of numbers of trafficking victims for several years in a row. Judicial cooperation with Albania is [facilitated](#) by Eurojust, as one of the 11 non-EU countries that has a Liaison Prosecutor at the Agency.

New security and hybrid threats

Despite encouraging developments, Albania has seen [democratic backsliding](#) in recent years: the 2017 parliamentary elections were marked by allegations of vote-buying, and led to bursts of anti-government protest throughout 2018 and 2019. The 14 May 2023 [local elections](#) were well-administered, but marked by deep division within the opposition. According to the World Justice Project's 2023 [Rule of Law Index](#), Albania ranks 91st of 142 countries. In its [annual progress report](#) the European Commission notes that more effort is needed in Albania's fight against organised crime, money laundering and high-level corruption. It also observes that limited job security and poor working conditions in the media sector pose serious risks of self-censorship and a reduced resistance to disinformation. Albania has adopted a 2020-2025 cybersecurity action plan has been adopted.



EU involvement

Albania was identified as a potential [candidate](#) for EU membership as early as the EU-Western Balkans Summit in Thessaloniki in 2003 and became a candidate country in June 2014. In March 2020, a political agreement was reached to [open accession negotiations](#) after the country had made progress towards meeting the political criteria and the five key priorities that need to be fulfilled to become an EU Member State. Albania's negotiations opened on 19 July 2022 at the first EU-Albania [intergovernmental conference](#). The Commission then started the *acquis* [screening process](#). The EU is the largest provider of [financial assistance](#) to the country. In October 2020, the Commission approved the [economic and investment plan for the Western Balkans](#) (€9 billion). As a non-permanent member since January 2022 (elected for a two-year term until 2023), Albania has actively engaged in the UN Security Council as a co-penholder for resolutions condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine. The country thereby aligns with the EU position when co-sponsoring and voting on UN resolutions on Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its humanitarian impact, as well as when voting on the Russia's suspension in the Human Rights Council.

Algeria

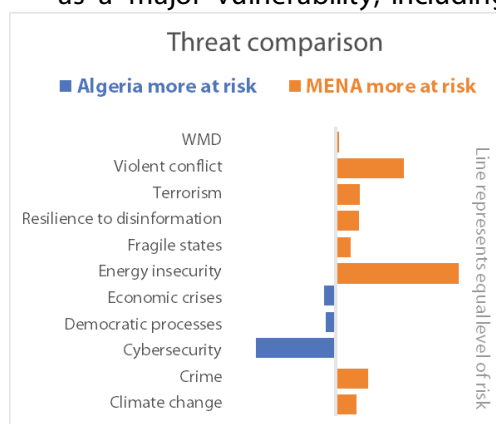
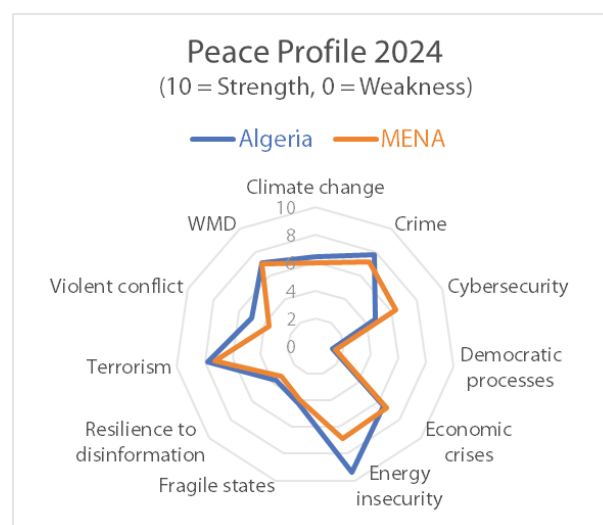
Algeria ranks 65th on the Normandy Index, with a score below the average for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries on cybersecurity, democratic processes and economic crisis. Political life in Algeria has long been dominated by a closed elite based in the military and the ruling party, the National Liberation Front (FLN). While there are multiple opposition parties in Parliament, elections are distorted by fraud, and electoral processes are not transparent.

Background and key issues

Algeria suffers from internal political instability and deteriorating bilateral relations with several countries, particularly Morocco. The 2019 presidential elections were marked by fraud. In 2023, Wassini Bouazza, former director of Internal Security was [sentenced](#) to 16 years imprisonment for attempting to fix the result of the 2019 presidential election. Although constitutional reform was a key demand of the 'Hirak' [protests](#), perceived lack of consultation with protesters' representatives, many of whom remain detained, is likely to reinforce perception of the government's unwillingness and inability to meet their demands. In June 2023, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune made a high-profile trip to Russia, where he received a warm welcome from President Vladimir Putin. They signed a bilateral [Enhanced Strategic Partnership](#) that envisions cooperation in new areas such as agriculture and trade.

New security and hybrid threats

In 2019, Algeria was [ranked](#) the least cybersecure of 60 countries, with researchers [identifying](#) this as a major vulnerability, including for defence. On democracy and human rights, Amnesty International has [highlighted](#) fair trial violations (including in death sentence cases) and torture claims reported by activists. The expulsion of [Mohamed Benhalima](#), a dissident and whistleblower who fled the country in 2019, received significant media attention in this context. Rising gas exports, following Russia's war on Ukraine, continue to boost Algeria's economy. However, the Economist Intelligence Unit cautions that over-centralised management and an opaque business environment, dominated by a small number of vested interests, may limit economic opportunity. Growing fiscal pressures [could](#) push Algeria towards fiscal reforms and external borrowing.



EU involvement

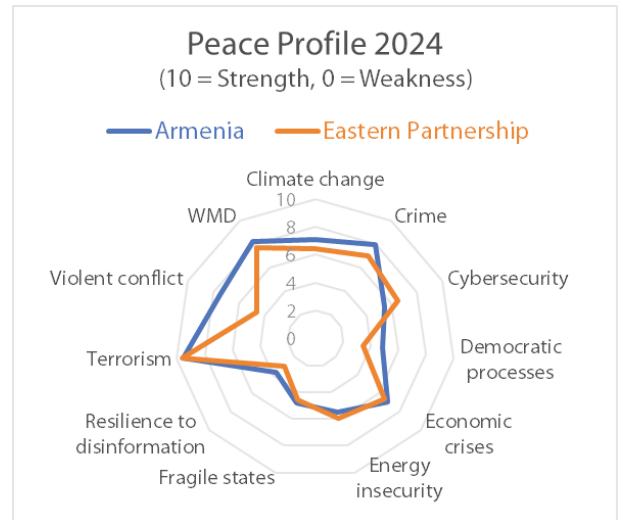
The EU-Algeria [Association Agreement](#) (AA), signed in 2002, entered into force in 2005. The EU and Algeria [adopted](#) new Partnership Priorities on 13 March 2017, in the framework of the renewed European Neighbourhood Policy. Together with the joint assessment of the AA's implementation, the partnership priorities identified joint areas of cooperation and guided dialogue between the EU, its Member States, and Algeria up to 2020. The EU and Algeria continue high-level dialogue on energy and security sectors, as well as an informal dialogue on migration. A revised strategy for the Southern Neighbourhood was [adopted](#) on 9 February 2021, accompanied by an [economic and investment plan for the southern neighbours](#); which supports Algeria in the area of climate and energy efficiency. The EU funded three projects under its [Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace](#) (IcSP) in Algeria, including on counter-terrorism. The EU receives almost two-thirds of Algeria's exports, making it Algeria's main trading partner.

Armenia

Armenia ranks 31st on the Normandy Index, four positions lower than in 2023. Recent progress in peace negotiations with Azerbaijan offer a positive prospect of concluding a three-decade conflict, although the Armenian government will have to bear some political cost. Armenia remains fragile in energy security and cybersecurity and faces a number of hybrid threats, including from Russia.

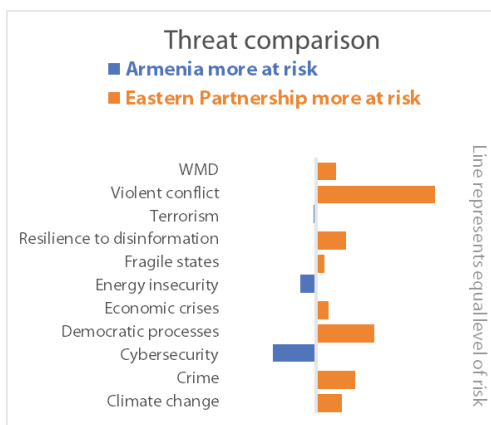
Background and key issues

[Armenia](#) has been in [conflict](#) with Azerbaijan over the Nagorno-Karabakh region ever since the end of the Cold War. Two bloody episodes, in 1992 and in 2020, alternated with periods of [frozen conflict](#) over three decades, with the international community unable to prompt a political settlement. A Russian-brokered [ceasefire](#) put an end to the 2020 war after 44 days and over 6 000 casualties. The 9 November 2020 [agreement](#) imposed territorial concessions on Armenia, leaving the status of Nagorno-Karabakh unresolved, with a Russian Federation peacekeeping contingent posted to the region until at least 2025. Violent clashes in September 2022, including an incursion by Azerbaijan into Armenian territory, led to fears of a third Karabakh war. After months of a [blockade](#) of the Lachin corridor (the only route connecting Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh), Azerbaijan launched a lightning military operation, retaking control of Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023. In a [mass exodus](#), the remaining 100 000 ethnic Armenians fled to Yerevan in fear of retaliation. Six months later, Russia announced the anticipated withdrawal of its peacekeeping troops. Recent progress in peace negotiations under EU and US mediation, including border demarcation issues, offer a prospect of achieving a comprehensive peace agreement, although growing demands from an emboldened Azerbaijan over the Zangezur corridor continue to threaten the process.



New security and hybrid threats

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine created new security challenges for Armenia, a traditional Russian ally. Russia's role as security guarantor is questioned, with Armenia [threatening](#) to leave the Collective Security Treaty Organization ([CSTO](#)). Armenia has been subject to significant [disinformation](#) campaigns and [cyberspace](#) attacks. A recent investigation evidenced the extensive use of [Pegasus spyware](#) across Armenia and Azerbaijan. Armenia also ranks low on energy security, reflecting its [dependence](#) on Russian energy, which the long-term [energy security strategy](#) aims to address. Although Armenia scores above the regional average on several indicators, the humanitarian crisis caused by the influx of refugees represent new threats to internal stability, while progress in border demarcation has political costs for the government.



EU involvement

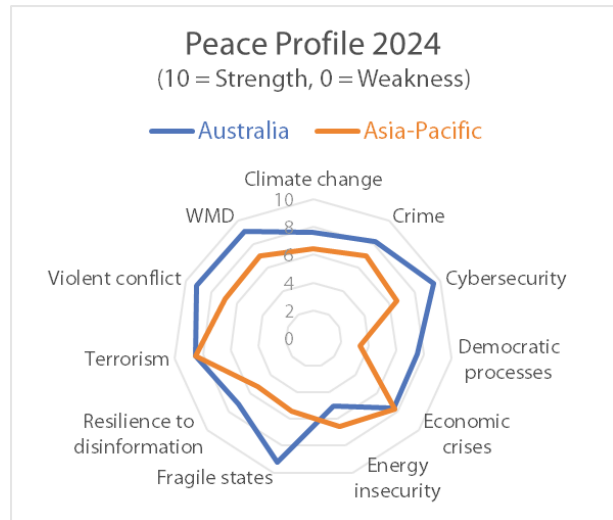
The EU has a strong interest in a politically stable Southern Caucasus region, including Armenia, which is part of the EU's [Eastern Partnership](#), and has significantly stepped up its presence in the region, against the backdrop of Russia's waning role as security guarantor. A fully fledged civilian mission in Armenia ([EUMA Armenia](#)) was [deployed](#) in February 2023, and the EU is an active player in ongoing peace negotiations. Armenia's relations with the EU are based on the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement ([CEPA](#)) which entered into force in 2021.

Australia

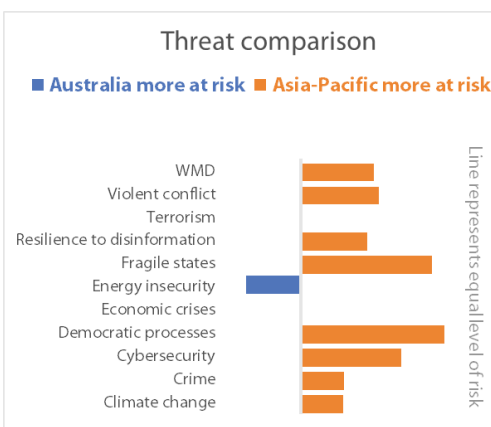
Australia ranks 3rd on the Normandy Index, indicating low levels of risk. It performs particularly well in democratic processes, state resilience and the management of economic crises, thanks to its robust democratic system. However, recent geopolitical events have increased energy insecurity.

Background and key issues

Australia has a long-standing democratic tradition in the form of a parliamentary system, enhanced by strong levels of education and a high per capita GDP. The 2022 [Human Development Index](#), ranks Australia 10th of the 191 countries measured. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2023 [Democracy Index](#) ranks Australia 14th overall, after Canada and before Japan. In addition, according to the Normandy Index fragile states' indicator, it is the world's 6th most stable country. This is largely due to strong perceptions of state legitimacy, effective public services and low levels of external intervention. Australia performs well on most indicators of traditional conflict. However, it continues previous years' [trends](#) in higher [temperatures and rainfall](#), signalling an increasing threat from climate change. According to the [Press Freedom Index](#), Australia comes 39th of 180 countries in 2024. The [Human Rights Watch](#) 2024 world report notes that the vibrant reputation of the country is tarnished by Australia's treatment of refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the failure to address systemic discrimination against First Nations people.



New security and hybrid threats



Thanks to its resilient democratic institutions, high standard of living and public services, and relative remoteness from the world's most densely populated regions, Australia has long been somewhat insulated from traditional security and hybrid threats. However, climate change is [exacerbating](#) resource stress and fire risks in an already-arid climate. In addition, relations with its largest trade partner, China, have recently grown more complex, and despite a [marginal improvement](#) in relations in 2023, there are concerns that growing US-China strategic [rivalry](#) could spill over into the South Pacific, making Australia's strategic near environment less benign.

EU involvement

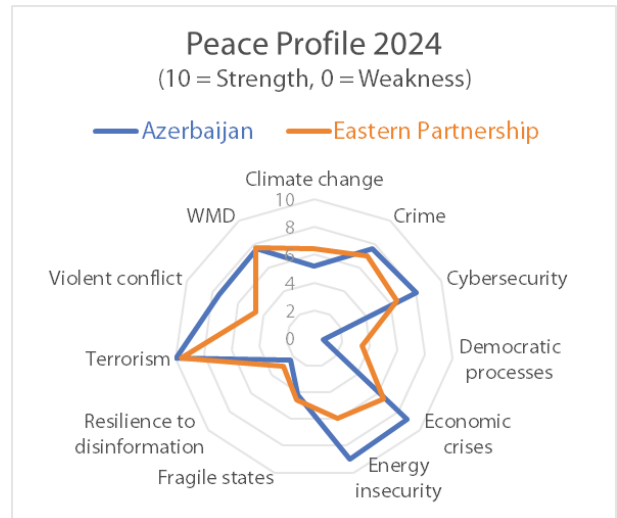
The EU's bilateral political relationship with Australia is based on the 2017 EU-Australia [Framework Agreement](#), in force since October 2022. In 2018, the EU launched negotiations with Australia on a bilateral [free trade agreement](#). The last round of negotiations was held in June 2023. The EU is Australia's third largest [trade partner](#) after China and Japan, and the third biggest investor in Australia. The EU-Australia [Mutual Recognition Agreement](#) facilitates trade in industrial products by reducing technical barriers. The agreement creates mutual recognition of conformity assessment procedures, thus reducing the cost of testing and certifying of exports and imports. Australia has [contributed](#) to the EU Maritime Capacity Building Mission (EUCAP NESTOR – now EUCAP Somalia), an EU-led maritime capacity building mission in the Horn of Africa and Western Indian Ocean, and the EU Advisory Mission in support of Security Sector Reform in Iraq (EUAM Iraq). Australia is mentioned as a regional partner in the [EU strategy for the Indo-Pacific](#). The European and Australian Parliaments also cooperate.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan ranks 34th on the Normandy Index, a significant improvement from last year, mainly due to progress in peace negotiations with its neighbour Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. With weak democratic processes and under accusation of serious human rights breaches, Azerbaijan remains fragile to disinformation, although it scores high on energy security and counter-terrorism.

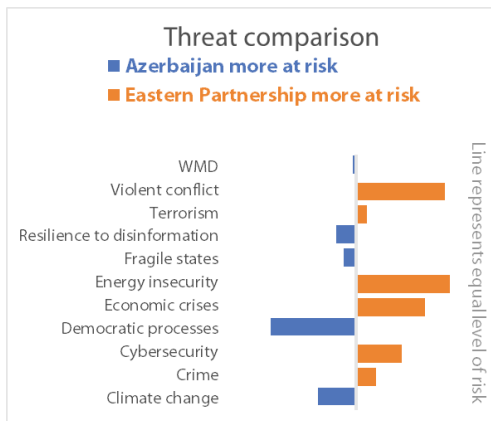
Background and key issues

[Azerbaijan](#) has been embroiled in a [conflict](#) with its neighbour Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Two bloody episodes, in 1992 and in 2020, have alternated with periods of [frozen conflict](#) over three decades, with the international community unable to prompt a political settlement. A Russian-brokered [ceasefire](#) put an end to the 2020 war after 44 days and over 6 000 casualties. The 9 November 2020 [agreement](#) imposed territorial concessions on Armenia, leaving the status of Nagorno-Karabakh unresolved. After months of [blockade](#) of the Lachin corridor (the only route connecting Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh), Azerbaijan launched a lightning military operation, retaking control of the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023. Fearing retaliation, a [mass exodus](#) of the remaining 100 000 ethnic Armenians resulted. Six months later, Russia surprisingly announced early withdrawal of its peacekeeping troops from the region. Recent progress in peace negotiations under EU and US mediation, including border demarcation issues, offer prospects of achieving a comprehensive [peace agreement](#), although growing demands from an emboldened Azerbaijan over the Zangezur corridor continue to pose a threat to the process.



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New security and hybrid threats



Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 altered the geopolitical chessboard in the South Caucasus. The waning role of Russia, a traditional ally of Armenia, and the growing importance of Turkey, a traditional ally of Azerbaijan, coupled with its vast [energy resources](#), have placed Azerbaijan in an advantageous strategic position. Against this backdrop Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev easily secured a fifth term in the February 2024 snap presidential elections, seen by [OSCE](#) observers as devoid of genuine pluralism. The human rights and democratic freedom situation in Azerbaijan continues to cause [concern](#), and the country scores very low in terms of [democratic processes](#) and in [disinformation](#) resilience.

EU involvement

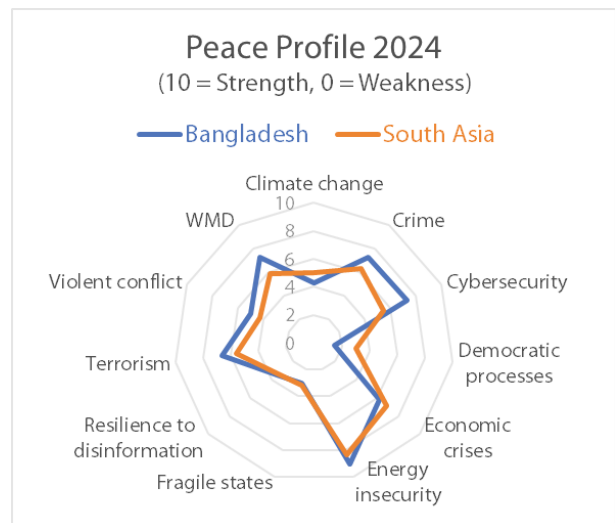
The EU has a strong interest in a politically stable Southern Caucasus region, including in Azerbaijan, part of the EU [Eastern Partnership](#). While Azerbaijan has so far not allowed the EU civilian mission in Armenia ([EUMA](#), deployed in 2023) to monitor its side of the border, the EU is an active mediator in the peace negotiations. EU-Azerbaijan bilateral relations are based on the EU-Azerbaijan Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, in force since 1999, and [negotiations](#) on a new comprehensive agreement were launched in 2017. On 18 July 2022, the European Commission [signed](#) a memorandum of understanding with Azerbaijan to increase its imports of Azeri natural gas to at least 20 billion cubic metres a year by 2027.

Bangladesh

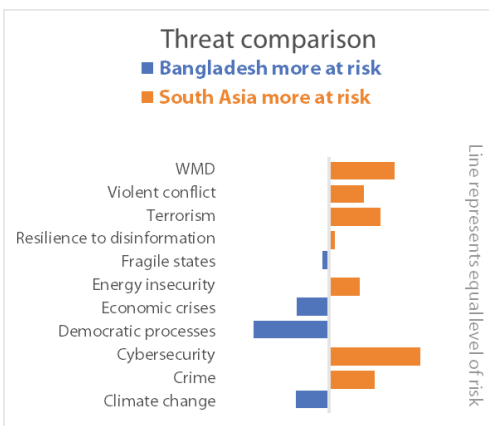
Bangladesh ranks 80th on the Normandy Index, making it less at risk than the Southern Asia average, however democracy and human rights are concerns. The country is also highly vulnerable to the risk of natural disaster due to climate change.

Background and key issues

Bangladesh has made impressive progress on reducing poverty since independence in 1971. However, the upper poverty line still stood at 18.7% in 2022, meaning 30 million Bangladeshis still live in poverty. In May 2023, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights warned of [rising income inequality](#) and drew attention to an emerging category of new 'poor'. Analysts warn of the country's economic over-reliance on garment production. Internal conflicts are rising: at 41st, the 2023 [Fragile State Index](#) ranks Bangladesh the most fragile of 179 states. International observers raised concerns regarding the state of [human rights and democracy](#) ahead of the January 2024 general election. Bangladesh's counter-terrorist Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) is allegedly responsible for the extrajudicial killings of activists and more than [600 enforced disappearances](#) since 2009.



New security and hybrid threats



The Reporters without Borders 2024 [Press Freedom Index](#) ranks Bangladesh 165th of 180 countries (the lowest in South Asia). Media freedom is under threat, given the level of attacks, surveillance, intimidation and [judicial harassment](#) against the press, leading to widespread media self-censorship. Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to the risk of natural disaster due to climate change: rising sea levels, extreme weather events and changing rainfall patterns, with potentially devastating consequences. Formed by the confluence of several major rivers, the low-lying delta (Asia's largest and the world's [most populated](#)) makes Bangladesh prone to [flooding](#).

EU involvement

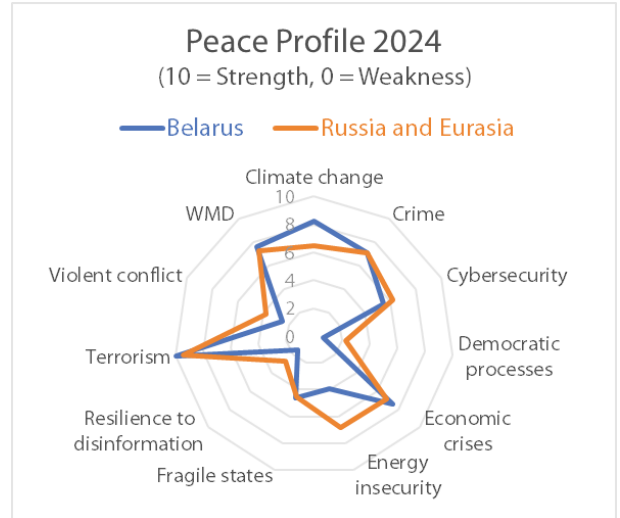
On the basis of the 2001 EU-Bangladesh [Cooperation Agreement](#), cooperation mainly covers economic development, human rights, good governance and the environment. In 2023, the EU provided over €38 million in humanitarian aid in response to the [Rohingya refugee crisis](#). The EU's [2021-2027](#) multiannual indicative programming for Bangladesh identifies three priorities: (i) human capital development; (ii) green inclusive development; and (iii) inclusive governance. The EU and Bangladesh hold annual Joint Commission meetings. The first [political dialogue](#), in November 2022 agreed to launch a Bangladesh-EU climate dialogue. In October 2023, negotiations were launched on a [new partnership and cooperation agreement](#). The EU is Bangladesh's [main trading partner](#): in 2020 it accounted for around 19.5% of Bangladesh's total trade. Bangladesh benefits from the 'Everything but Arms' ([EBA](#)) Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) arrangement for least developed countries (LDC's). Following the collapse of the [Rana Plaza](#) factory in capital Dhaka in 2013, killing 1 138 workers and injuring over 2 500, the European Commission shaped the [Sustainability Compact](#), with the Government of Bangladesh, the US, Canada and the [International Labour Organization](#), which commits to improving workplace safety, respect for labour rights, and responsible business conduct.

Belarus

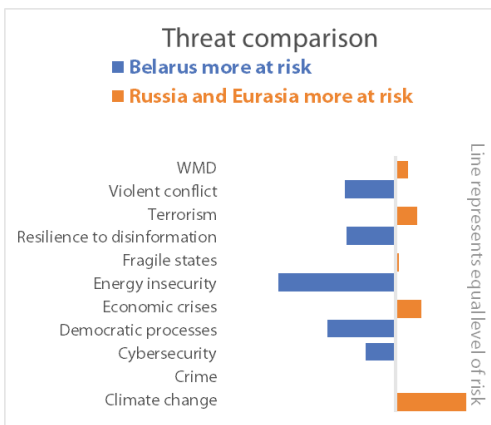
Belarus ranks 89th on the Normandy Index. The country's involvement in Russia's war on Ukraine, preceded by a brutal crackdown against its citizens protesting against electoral fraud, as well as the regime's dependency on Russia's support, are some of the key factors in its peace profile.

Background and key issues

Belarus gained independence in 1991, when it signed the treaty dissolving the Soviet Union. In 1994, Alexander Lukashenko was elected President for the first time. With a poor human rights record over many years, the August 2020 falsified [presidential elections](#) were followed by a brutal [crack-down](#) against protesters, costing lives. Continued and increasing repression against Belarusian civil society and independent [media](#), as well as the Lukashenko regime's [support](#) for Russia's war in Ukraine, lead to a high risk of violent conflict and an extremely poor assessment for democratic processes in the country. With Belarusian state media repeating government propaganda, frequently aligned with Russia, the country also scores poorly on resilience to disinformation. Belarus' geographical location in northern Europe means that this landlocked country scores high on resilience to climate change.



New security and hybrid threats



Belarus's involvement in Russia's war on Ukraine initially enabled Russia to attack Kyiv from the north, when Lukashenko granted permission for the firing of ballistic missiles from Belarusian territory and the transport of Russian troops and military equipment. The constitutional [referendum](#) of 27 February 2022, among other [changes](#), [renounced](#) a [paragraph](#) stating that 'The Republic of Belarus aims at making its territory a nuclear-free zone, and the state neutral'. In March 2023, Russia [announced](#) its decision to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, a move seen as increasing [pressure](#) on the EU and NATO's eastern border. In June 2024, Russia and Belarus [conducted](#) their second joint nuclear drill.

EU involvement

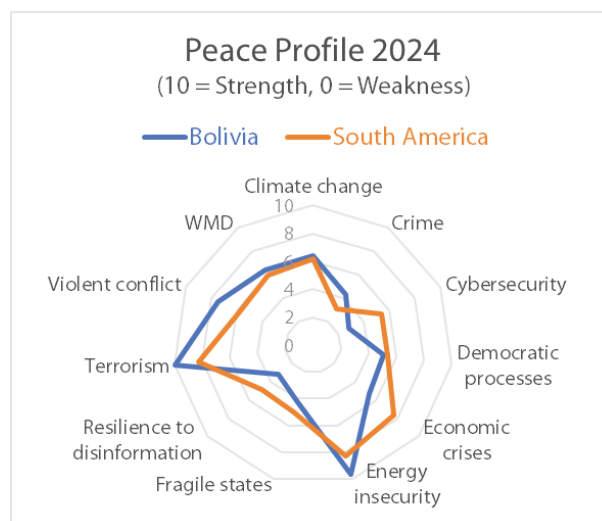
The EU does [not recognise](#) the results of the August 2020 elections and has [sanctioned](#) Belarus for its increasing human rights abuses. In June 2021, Belarus announced its [withdrawal](#) from the Eastern Partnership as well as other existing structures, such as the EU-Belarus human rights dialogue. In September 2021, Commission [announced](#) the partial suspension of EU-Belarus Visa Facilitation Agreement for officials of the Belarus regime. The EU [condemned](#) the country's participation in Russia's war in Ukraine and imposed new [economic](#) sanctions. The EU has committed almost [€140 million](#) in support of the Belarusian people since August 2020, and [outlined](#) a €3 billion [economic support package](#) for a future democratic Belarus, available upon the country's democratic transition. Under this condition, the package's flagship initiatives are also included in the [Eastern Partnership](#) (EaP) post-2020 agenda. A February 2022 statement by the HR/VP [criticises](#) the deletion of reference to Belarus's non-nuclear status from its constitution as a further concern. The [European Parliament](#) has called on the EU institutions to support international prosecution against the Lukashenko regime for war crimes and crimes against humanity relating to Russia's war on Ukraine. Parliament [denounces](#) the regime's repression of the Belarusian people and [calls](#) for democratic representatives to take up seats vacated by Belarusian authorities. The HR/VP launched a [Consultative Group](#) which [met](#) in December 2023 in Brussels.

Bolivia

Bolivia ranks 60th on the Normandy Index. The country has been challenged by instability, political and social polarisation, in particular since 2019, when the results of presidential elections were nullified, following significant social unrest. Protests continued long after new elections in 2020, which saw the victory of Evo Morales' party candidate Luis Arce. Drugs and violence – the latter mainly touching vulnerable people such as indigenous communities and women – remain major instability drivers.

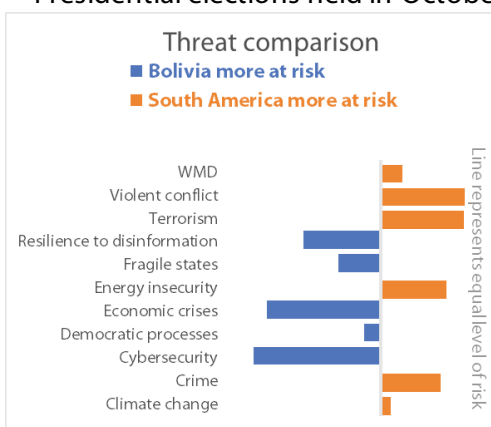
Background and key issues

Bolivia remains strongly polarised. Land and natural resources rights and tenure remain drivers of conflict, linked with power and identity issues. The marginalisation of Bolivia's [36 groups of indigenous inhabitants](#) has a long history; indigenous rights were not formally recognised until [1994](#). This changed with the election of Morales in 2005, the first indigenous democratic president in South America. He introduced land redistribution and rights reforms, reallocating land away from non-indigenous Bolivians and [commercial farmers](#). Morales and Arce are now fighting to lead the party, with the next elections due to take place in November 2025. This [fight](#) within the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) ruling party has been brought to electoral and judicial authorities, which increases the level of unpredictability of the November 2025 elections' outcome and the risk of ensuing unrest and violence.



New security and hybrid threats

Presidential elections held in October 2019 were marred by [contested](#) accusations of fraud. New elections were held peacefully on 18 October 2020 and won by Morales party candidate [Luis Arce](#). Like much of the region, Bolivia [demonstrates](#) high vulnerability to cyber-attack, and faces [disinformation](#) challenges. In December 2023, the Constitutional Court [ruled](#) that no president could serve more than two terms, consecutive or otherwise, a ruling that might not be sufficient to put an end to hostilities within the MAS and in wider society. Bolivia recently [shifted](#) from a coca-cultivating country to a producer and exporter of cocaine, with a 13 % share of world coca production, just below Colombia (61 %) and Peru (26 %).



EU involvement

Bolivia benefits from the EU's regional cooperation programmes, with a focus on the [security-development nexus](#). It is also a beneficiary of the EU Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+). Under the Global Europe Instrument, the current multi-annual indicative programme ([MIP](#)) for Bolivia sets out an allocation for 2021-2024 of €104 million. This is split between: environment, climate change and inclusive economic development, focusing on working with women and young people (€83 million, 80 %); and governance and human rights (€14 million, 13.5 %, with an emphasis on support in the fight against corruption and illicit drug trafficking). After the interruption of regular bilateral meetings in 2018, the [8th High-level Dialogue](#) between Bolivia and the EU resumed in La Paz on [31 May 2022](#). The [Global Gateway](#) Investment Agenda for Bolivia has two priority areas: critical raw materials, notably green lithium, and renewable energy. The [Team Europe proposal](#) activities in Bolivia include support for sustainable and climate change-resilient landscapes, green energy transition and green economy in sustainable cities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

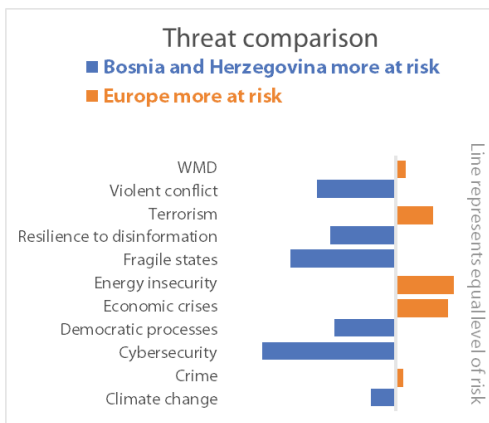
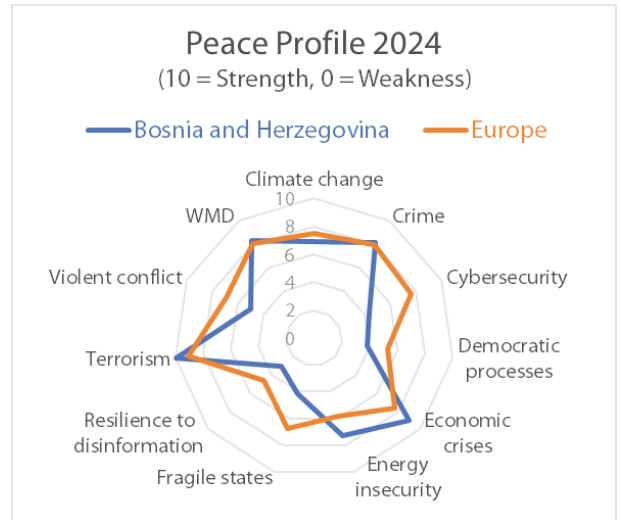
Bosnia and Herzegovina ranks 38th on the Normandy Index, remaining more at risk than the European average, in particular on energy insecurity and economic crisis. Recent developments, mainly in the Republika Srpska entity, run counter to the positive momentum of European integration and reforms.

Background and key issues

Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced armed conflict between 1992 and 1995, triggering several international peacekeeping missions. In 1995, the Dayton Peace Agreement resulted in a decentralised government system, dividing the country into two semi-independent federal units, Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This decentralised governance is partly the reason for Bosnia and Herzegovina's third lowest [Fragile States Index](#) score in Europe. Efficient cooperation between the country's constitutional entities is impeded by mistrust among ethnic groups and political parties and also differing foreign policy orientation. The country is [heavily dependent on coal](#), at 54% of total electricity production, but is investing in renewable energies, with vast hydro and non-hydro renewable energy potential.

New security and hybrid threats

Bosnia and Herzegovina is vulnerable to new security threats, owing to resources still being allocated to rebuilding following the conflict and a highly decentralised state structure. In 2021, Milorad Dodik, the Serbian member of Bosnia's tripartite presidency, and leader of the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) party, [threatened](#) to withdraw Bosnian Serbs from the country's key institutions. Dodik [reiterated](#) a threat to secede a day ahead of a UN vote on whether to establish an annual memorial day for the 1995 Srebrenica Bosnian genocide. On 23 May 2024, the UN General Assembly [adopted](#) this resolution, condemning any denial of the Srebrenica genocide as a historical event, by 84 votes in favour to 19 against, with 68 abstentions. Another risk is related to the unaccomplished [electoral and constitutional reforms](#). The country is also highly vulnerable to disinformation and ranks 70th of 180 countries in the 2024 [Freedom of Press Indicator](#). Undocumented [migration](#) has strained local and state authorities, especially in areas that shoulder most of the burden of migration management.



EU involvement

The EU's leaders unanimously decided to grant EU candidate status to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 December 2022. Since 2004, the EUFOR [Althea](#) mission has supported the country's efforts to secure peace, following the [Dayton Peace Agreement](#). In its opinion on Bosnia's EU membership application, the European Commission recommended moving towards opening EU accession negotiations. The EU is [assisting](#) with a number of building and twinning programmes. The EU is also supporting environmental and climate transition through the [Pre-accession Instrument](#). The EU has committed [over €80 million](#) to tackle pandemic-related challenges in the country, including disinformation. During 2021-2023, the EU [contributed](#) to military and medical capabilities, financed through the European Peace Facility. In December 2023, the European Council decided to [open accession negotiations](#) with Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Brazil

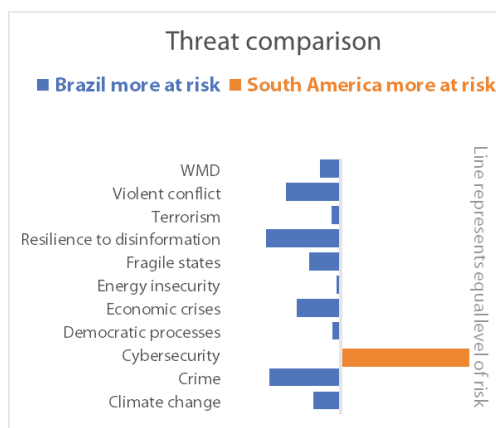
Brazil ranks 88th on the Normandy Index, its position deteriorating further against previous years. The country performs lower than the South American average for most indicators, except terrorism and cybersecurity.

Background and key issues

Brazil's profound 2014 to 2017 economic recession exacerbated deep-rooted social inequalities, translating into a steep rise in homicides. While Brazil's homicide rate is declining, the country nevertheless [recorded](#) just under 40 000 homicides in 2023. The 2022 [Human Development Index](#) ranked Brazil 89th of the 191 countries measured. The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index ranks the country 51st overall, performing very well on electoral process and pluralism. Brazil ranks 104th of 180 countries on press freedom, according to the 2024 [Press Freedom Index](#). While the [Human Rights Watch](#) report notes the new administration reversed certain of the previous administration's harmful policies (e.g. environment, sexual and reproductive rights), there is more to be done to tackle chronic police abuse and to protect forest defenders.



New security and hybrid threats



At global level, Brazil's performance is above average, in particular for cybersecurity (16th highest). At the same time, resilience to [disinformation](#) ranks very low (115th). Climate change is also an important risk (92nd). It is also linked to risks to Brazil's energy and water security. At the same time, a remarkable improvement took place in 2023, with Amazon deforestation recorded as nearly halving compared to the previous year. Human Rights Watch [points out](#) that the previous administration was responsible for the [highest annual deforestation](#) of the Brazilian Amazon rainforest of the past 15 years.

EU involvement

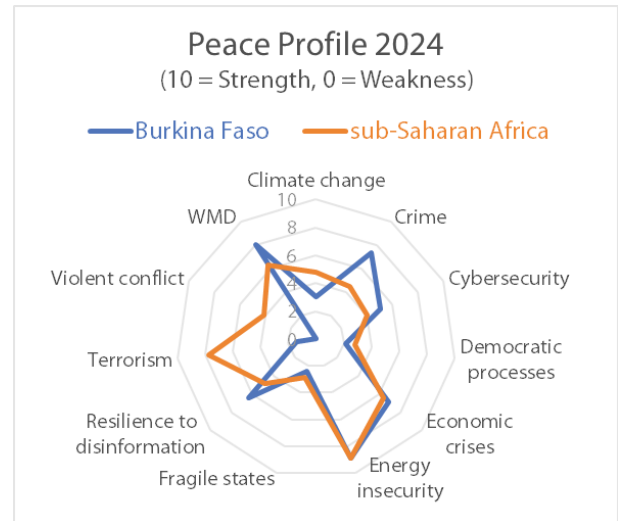
The EU and Brazil entered a strategic partnership in 2007. Through a large array of sector dialogues, the EU [supports](#) Brazil, among other things, to strengthen the protection of human rights defenders and the human rights of particularly vulnerable groups, and to counter violence, notably domestic violence against women. To enhance Brazilians' resilience to disinformation, the EU provides funding for projects on fake news and fosters transparency in areas such as public procurement. The EU's Partnership Instrument [funds](#) a wide variety of sustainability projects in Brazil. Moreover, Brazil [benefits](#) from the EU programme for Latin America EUROCLIMA+. In June 2019, the EU and the four founding members of Mercosur, including Brazil, reached an agreement in principle on a comprehensive [trade agreement](#). In early June 2023, the HR/VP and the Commission adopted a joint communication setting out a new [agenda for relations](#) between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean. Following up on this communication, Commission President von der Leyen travelled to Brazil a few days later, in the context of a wider trip to Latin America to strengthen relations with key partners in the region ahead of the July 2023 EU-CELAC Summit in Brussels. Brazil remains key EU [trade partner](#). Boosted by shipments of oil, unroasted coffee and Brazilian soybean, the volume of Brazilian exports to the EU jumped 46.2 % in April 2024 compared to the same period in 2023.

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso ranks 113th on the Normandy Index. It has become a new epicentre of Islamist extremist activity, as regional terrorist groups infiltrate the country, taking advantage of local grievances. It experienced two coups in 2022 and has turned away from France and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), while strengthening cooperation with Russia.

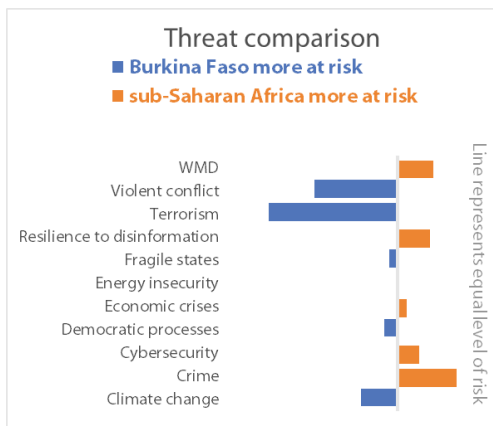
Background and key issues

Burkina Faso faces an overwhelming threat of violent extremism. [Jihadist groups](#) based in Mali, such as the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims – an umbrella coalition of al-Qaeda-affiliated movements, and domestic terror groups such as Ansar al-Islam, flourish and perpetrate an increasing number of attacks. Islamist armed groups controlled [about 40%](#) of the country's territory in 2022. President (in office 2015-2022) Roch Marc Christian Kaboré's failure to address the deteriorating security situation was the reason invoked for two successive military coups in January and September 2022. Interim President Captain Ibrahim Traoré terminated military cooperation with France in January 2023. In September 2023, he declared the elections, scheduled for July 2024, were not a priority.



New security and hybrid threats

Since 2023, Burkina Faso has increased [military cooperation](#) with [Russia](#), which has provided military equipment, troops and military advisers. On 16 September 2023, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger established a mutual defence pact, the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). On 28 January 2024, together with Mali and Niger, Burkina Faso announced its [withdrawal](#) from ECOWAS. This has the potential to disrupt fundamental economic and political frameworks, both for the withdrawing states and those remaining in ECOWAS, impacting trade, freedom of movement and regional security. In addition, it makes the perspective of a return to constitutional order more uncertain. More than 6 million (out of a population of 23 million) are in need of humanitarian assistance. Two million Burkinabé have [left their homes](#), due to the compounded impacts of violence, climate change and natural disaster. The number of food insecure people has multiplied ninefold between 2018 and 2022, up to [3 million](#) in 2023.



EU involvement

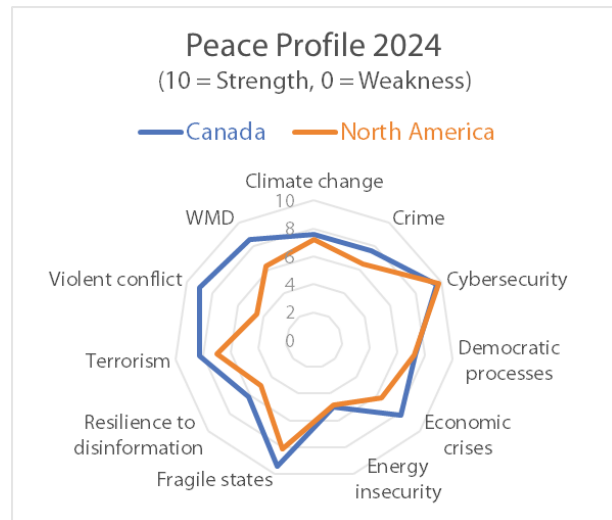
A [new strategy for the Sahel](#) was adopted in April 2021, strengthening the political dimension of the EU's partnership with the G5 Sahel countries, including Burkina Faso, and the emphasis on sustainable development beyond military engagement. The EU supported ECOWAS's decisions against Burkina Faso's coups and the withdrawal, but did not suspend its aid. Direct support for the most vulnerable populations, for stronger institutional capacities and democratic culture in support of the democratic transition process, and for setting response mechanisms against disinformation campaigns aimed at undermining EU action are among the objectives of the [2023-2025 multi-annual action plan for Burkina Faso](#). In 2023, the EU provided €25.5 million for humanitarian action in Burkina Faso.

Canada

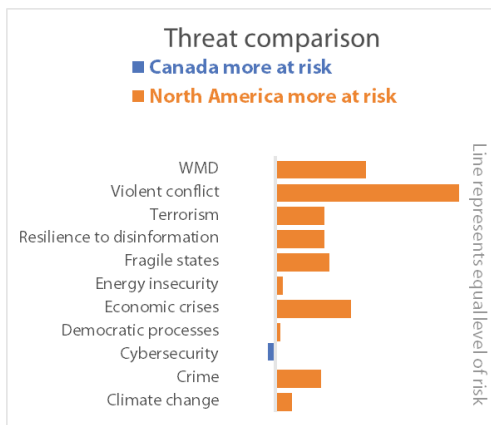
Canada ranks 6th on the Normandy Index, indicating low levels of risk. It performs better than the world average on every indicator except energy security, and scores notably well in democratic processes and cybersecurity.

Background and key issues

Canada has a long-standing democratic tradition in the form of a parliamentary system enhanced by strong levels of education and a high GDP per capita. The latest [Human Development Index](#) ranked Canada 18th of 191 countries measured. The Economist Intelligence Unit's [Democracy Index](#) ranks Canada 13th overall, performing exceptionally well in electoral process and pluralism and political participation, but its ranking has suffered from rising polarisation and diminishing confidence in government. Canada is the world's 5th most stable country, according to the Normandy Index, as measured by the fragile states' indicator. Canada performs well on most indicators of traditional conflict, yet was ranked 52nd on the 2024 [Global Terrorism Index](#).



New security and hybrid threats



Canada has high levels of economic development and human capital, and is the [9th largest economy](#) and second most stable economy globally, as measured by the economic crises indicator. Canada is one of only a few developed countries to be a net exporter of energy. Canadian society enjoys a high level of press freedom, ranking 14th on the 2024 [Press Freedom Index](#). [Cybercrime](#), in the form of online fraud and attempts to steal personal, financial, and corporate information, continues to be the most significant threat to Canada's cybersecurity. The [Human Rights Watch](#) 2024 World Report noted widespread violations of indigenous peoples and immigration detainees' rights.

EU involvement

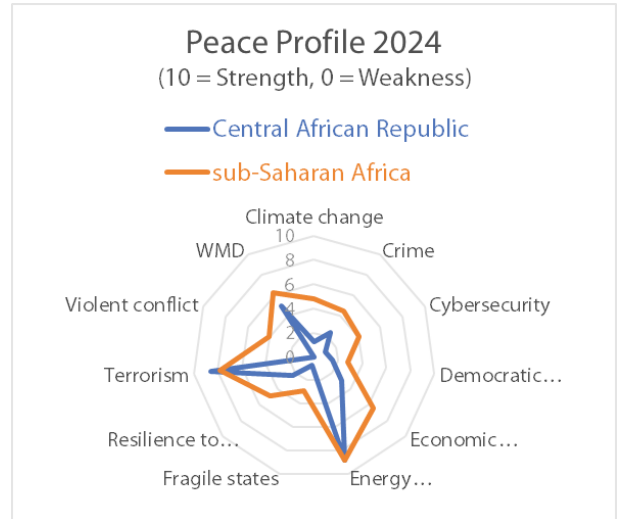
Canada has been a formal [strategic partner](#) for the EU since 2016. Since then, the partners have strengthened their [foreign policy and sectoral cooperation](#), with a view to upholding their joint commitment to advance democratic principles and human rights and to work together to strengthen international peace and security and rules-based multilateralism. As one of the steadiest contributors to the CSDP, Canada joined the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) military mobility project in 2021 and, made progress in joining the PESCO 'Network of Logistics Hub in Europe and Support to Operations' project in 2023. The EU and Canada have also concluded a security of information agreement for the exchange of classified information. Canada and the EU are also strong economic partners. In 2017, the [Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement](#) (CETA) between the EU and Canada provisionally entered into force, and aims at setting a high standard for sustainability chapters in trade agreements. In 2021, the two sides also set up a [strategic partnership](#) on raw materials. In March 2022, following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the President of the European Commission and the Prime Minister of Canada set up a dedicated working group on the green transition and liquefied natural gas (LNG), to contribute to greater sustainability and ensuring energy security. Lastly, the EU and Canada joined forces as leaders in the international fight against climate change, including by co-convening meetings of the [Ministerial on Climate Action](#) (MoCA) with China (the most recent was held in July 2023).

Central African Republic

At 136th, the Central African Republic (CAR) ranks last but one on the Normandy Index, as was the case in 2023. The country has struggled through ongoing episodes of civil war since 2003. Foreign fighters, including the Russia-backed 'Africa Corps' (former 'Wagner Group'), are very active. The political and particularly the security situation remains highly fragile, with serious risk of worsening, and escalating violent conflict.

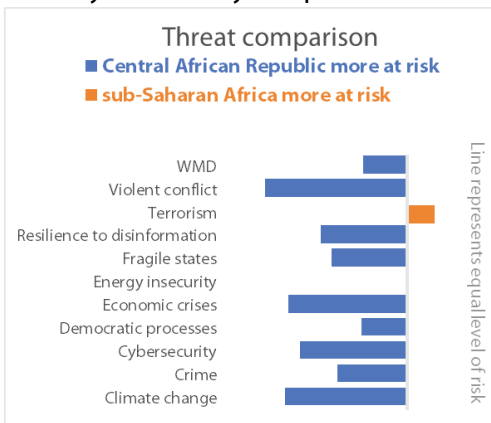
Background and key issues

Although President Faustin-Archange Touadéra was democratically elected in 2016, violence between politically motivated armed groups remains a threat. The Anti-Balaka alliance dominates the southwest and the former Seleka militia the northwest of the country. Following the July 2023 constitutional [referendum](#), the revised constitution extends the presidential term from five to seven years and removes term limits, allowing Touadéra to run again in 2025. The CAR ranked 8th globally on the 2023 [Fragile States Index](#). The security vacuum that has emerged contributes to the country's high violent conflict score. The 2024 [Global Terrorism Index](#) ranks the CAR 59th, which signals a 'very low impact of terrorism. Elections in December 2020 exacerbated instability, as armed groups mobilised and [disrupted](#) the electoral process. The CAR has a strong energy potential, including in green energy.



New security and hybrid threats

The CAR is vulnerable to the emerging threats that affect weak states, including threats to cybersecurity and press freedom. The CAR is one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change in Africa, leading to massive population displacement and violent conflict between [farmers and herders](#) over water and pastures. A [Rwandan intervention force](#) (over 2 000 troops) is present in the country. The insecurity challenge has worsened with the presence of Russian mercenaries. The CAR abstained in the 2 March 2022 UNGA resolution condemning the Russian aggression against Ukraine, while its President criticised the West in [March 2023](#), calling for an end to the arms and diamond embargo, while the UN accused the CAR army and 'Wagner Group' of exactions against the population and elected representatives. [UN experts](#) warn of the conflict in neighbouring Sudan spreading to the CAR.



EU involvement

The EU military Training Mission in the Central African Republic ([EUTM CAR](#)), is still present in the country, advising and training national forces. President Touadéra acknowledged its importance during the 5th edition of the [RCA-EU Partnership Dialogue](#) held in Bangui on 15 May 2024. A civilian advisory mission, [EUAM RCA](#), was launched in 2020 to support reform of the internal security forces. However, mercenaries' activities may threaten the future of these missions. On 5 May 2022, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on threats to security in the Sahel, condemning the Wagner Group's increased presence in the Sahel, deeming it 'incompatible with security and defence cooperation with the EU'. The CAR benefits from duty-free, quota-free access to the EU market ('[Everything but Arms](#)'). Under the Global Europe Instrument, the 2021-2024 multi-annual indicative programme ([MIP](#)) allocates €172 million for the CAR, mainly split between: peace, security, justice and governance (€57 million), green transition (€57 million) and human development (€51.5 million). EU [sanctions](#) are also markers of the state of bilateral relations.

Chad

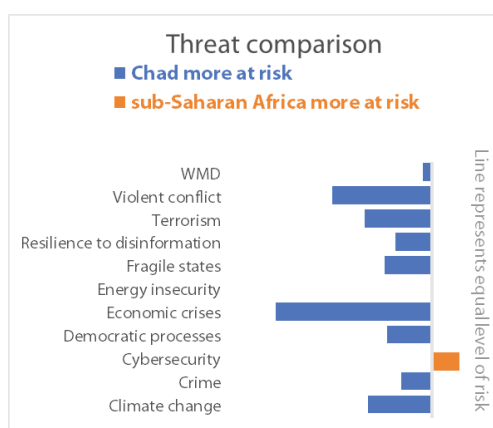
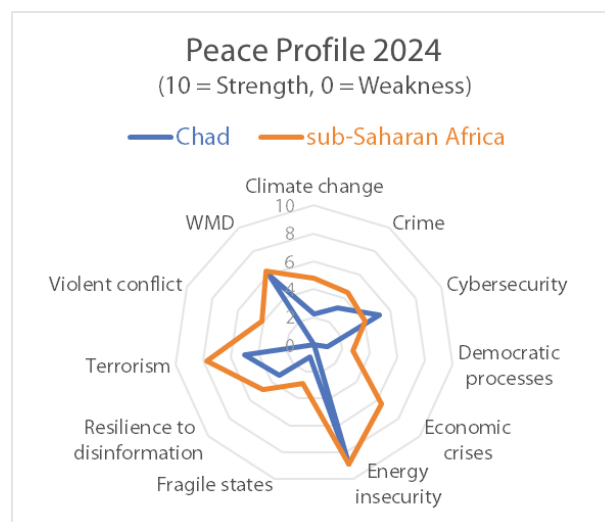
Chad ranks 135th on the Normandy Index, much weaker than most Sub-Saharan African countries. The country suffers from a complex set of insurgencies particularly around Lake Chad, and from the spill-over effects of conflict in neighbouring countries. This is further compounded by climate fragility and food insecurity.

Background and key issues

Largely dependent on oil revenues, Chad's [economy](#) remains fragile and vulnerable to increased pressure on natural resources due to climate change and population displacement. The IMF expects 2.9 % GDP growth in 2024. The country has a turbulent history of civil war, coups and democratic suppression. When President Idriss Déby died soon after his re-election in April 2021, his son, Mahamat Déby, replaced him unconstitutionally, as the transitional leader. Postponed to May 2024, Mahamat Déby ran in the presidential election against Prime Minister Succès Masra and previous prime minister Albert Pahimi Padacke. Mahamat Déby won the controversial election on 6 May 2024.

New security and hybrid threats

In addition to internal security risks, Chad has been involved in conflict in its border regions. [Boko Haram](#) and other groups' attacks and their repression by the military have triggered internal population displacement. Lake Chad is notably the epicentre of complex internal displacement and refugee movements. Since April 2023, the crisis born from power conflict in [Sudan](#) has caused mass refugee movements into Chad, pushing the country into a humanitarian catastrophe. Tensions on the border between Chad and the [Central African Republic](#) have escalated, with each country accusing the other of supporting insurgent militias. At least [6 million](#) (local population, internally displaced persons and refugees) need humanitarian aid. The government's limited capacity to address the root causes of insurgencies and humanitarian needs could further increase [Chad's instability](#). President Deby's visit to Moscow in January 2024 marked a further strengthening of Chad's links with [Russia](#), which offered security assistance to the Sahel country. This could lead Chad to distance itself from Western allies in favour of Russia, despite France's support for President Déby.



EU involvement

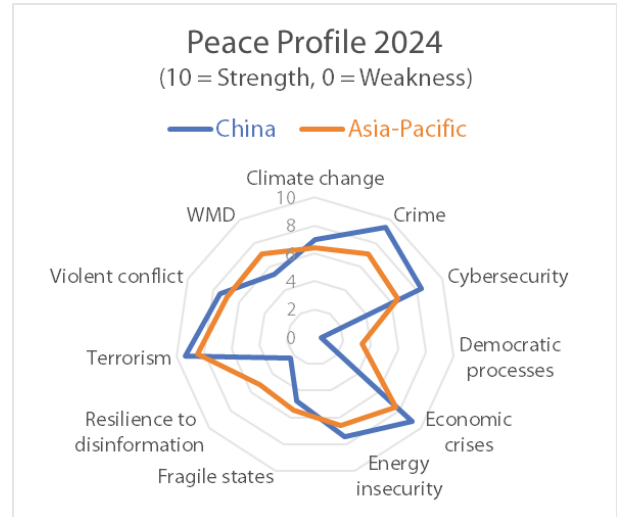
The EU adopted a [new strategy for the Sahel](#) in April 2021. Beyond military engagement, the new strategy strengthens the political dimension and the emphasis on sustainable development of the EU's partnership with the G5 Sahel countries, including Chad. The EU supports the democratic transition process through the €280 million 2021-2024 multiannual indicative programme, which supports security and justice sector reform and democratisation. To address the humanitarian needs triggered by the impact of conflict and climate change, the EU allocated over €56 million in [humanitarian aid](#) to Chad in 2023 and €26.5 million in 2024 (as of 31 January).

China

Since the Normandy Index's last edition, China has advanced 14 positions to rank 32nd, and is no longer more at risk than the Asia-Pacific average. Since the start of economic reforms in 1978, China has become the world's second largest economy in terms of nominal GDP after the USA, and first in purchasing power parity (PPP). However, increasing signals predict rising structural challenges to China's economy will imply a (much) more moderate growth performance in the medium-term.

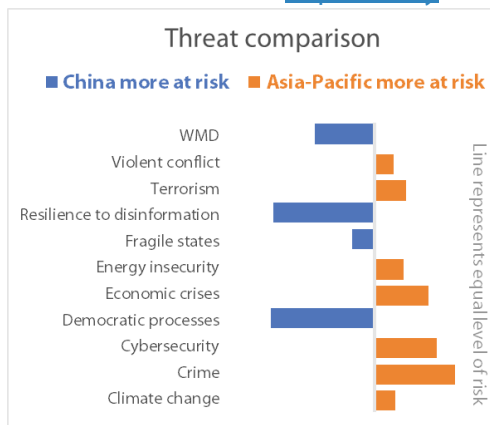
Background and key issues

China remains [entangled](#) in border disputes with two of its neighbours, India and Bhutan. Moreover, China's [claims](#) to sovereignty over Taiwan and several maritime areas in the East and South China Seas are increasingly heavily contested. In support of these claims, China fields the world's [largest](#) army and second largest [defence budget](#). China also possesses active nuclear weapons. While China is performing well on crime, cybersecurity and economic crisis indicators, it scores very badly on democratic processes. It performs poorly on the [Fragile States Index](#) 'human rights and rule of law' criterion. This is largely a result of the Chinese government's ongoing [authoritarian state repression](#) in Hong Kong, Tibet and Xinjiang, which some states have labelled as [genocide](#).



New security and hybrid threats

China's rapid economic growth has had a negative impact on its natural resources and environment. China's continued [dependency](#) on coal has dangerous implications for the environment and human



health, coal combustion being the single largest source of air pollution-related health impacts in the country. China officially [submitted](#) its 'carbon neutrality before 2060' target, but did not go further at COP27 in 2022. China accounted for 95 % of the world's new coal power construction activity in 2023, according to the latest [annual report](#) from Global Energy Monitor (GEM). China relies on new technologies for its authoritarian model of social surveillance and conformity, which it portrays as an alternative to liberal governance models. It consequently ranks 17th (of 180 countries) on the 2024 [World Press Freedom Index](#). A one-party state, its score on 'democratic processes' (0.42) is far below the Asia-Pacific average (3.41).

EU involvement

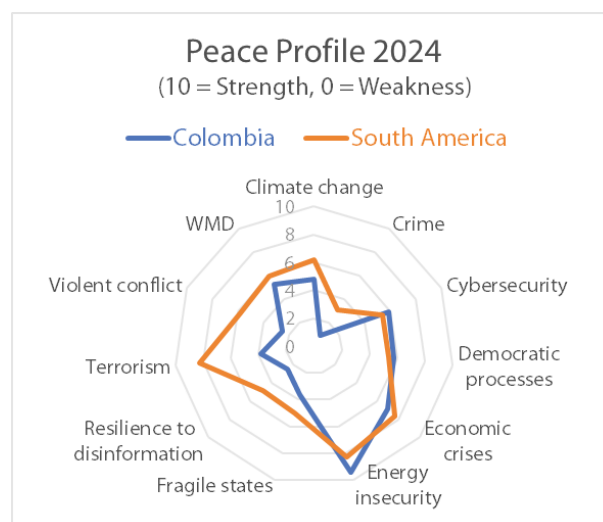
EU and China established a strategic partnership in 2003 through more than [60 dialogue formats](#), including on non-proliferation and disarmament. These have contributed to the implementation of the 2020 EU-China Strategic Agenda for Cooperation. The regular EU-China [human rights dialogue](#) also raises issues such as freedom of expression and of religious belief, although with very limited progress. In 2019, the European institutions issued a [joint communication on EU-China – A strategic outlook](#), in which China is simultaneously described as a 'cooperation partner ... an economic competitor ... and a systemic rival'. In December 2020, the EU and China concluded, 'in principle', a [Comprehensive Agreement on Investment](#) (CAI), which is 'frozen'. In March 2021, the EU imposed [sanctions](#) on Chinese officials accused of perpetrating human rights abuses against the Uyghur minority in Xinjiang. The European Parliament recently adopted resolutions on: the [human rights situation in Xinjiang](#); the [arrest of Cardinal Zen in Hong Kong](#); the deteriorating [situation in the Taiwan Strait](#) and the crackdown on [peaceful protests](#).

Colombia

Colombia ranks 114th on the Normandy Index. It is more at risk than the regional average, except on energy insecurity, and performs below average on terrorism, violent conflict, and resilience to disinformation.

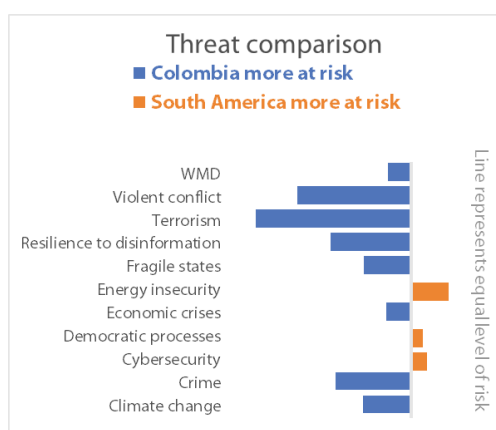
Background and key issues

Internal armed conflict, violence, kidnapping and forced displacement continue to pose a major security challenge in Colombia, despite the historic 2016 [peace agreement](#) reached between the Government of Colombia (under former president Juan Manuel Santos) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). In power since August 2022, Colombia's President Gustavo Petro, the country's first left-leaning President aims to bring 'total peace' to the country by 2025. Peace talks between the Colombian government and the biggest remaining group, the National Liberation Army (ELN) officially resumed on 21 November 2022. However, the peace agreement and talks have not resulted in greater security. According to [Human Rights Watch](#) and the [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) (ICRC), violence increased in many remote areas. More than 1 200 human rights defenders and social leaders have been killed in Colombia since 2016. [According](#) to the Colombian Ombudsman's Office, 181 community leaders and human rights defenders were murdered in 2023.



New security and hybrid threats

In 2022, Colombia had the [highest number](#) of murders of human rights defenders. Based on the degree of inequality in income distribution measured by the Gini coefficient, Colombia is also the most unequal country in Latin America since 2021. The demobilisation of the FARC in 2016 resulted in a [power vacuum](#) and consequent fragmentation of the criminal landscape, as well as battles between numerous non-state armed groups and criminal gangs for control of Colombia's strategic criminal economies – in particular coca cultivation and drug trafficking. According to the [UNODC](#), these developments have also led to the growing presence of foreign organised crime groups in Colombia, including from Mexico and the Balkans. Coca plantations in Colombia [rose](#) from 204 000 to 230 000 hectares at the end of 2022, and drug production reached 1 738 tonnes – the highest figures ever recorded. In 2023, coca prices [collapsed](#) amid record harvests.



EU involvement

The EU supported the Colombian peace process with [€645 million](#) for action such as the Peace Laboratories and the Peace Territories project, the [Trust Fund](#) for Colombia (to which 21 EU Member States and Chile pledged €125 million); European Investment Bank (EIB) loans; and the IcSP, which mobilised an [extra €40 million](#) for critical elements of the peace process, such as transitional justice. [Famon Gilmore](#), EU special envoy from 2015 to 2019, considered the EU's role in the peace process a success. Development cooperation between EU and Colombia totalled €127 million for 2014-2020. The EU has a [Comprehensive Trade Agreement](#) with Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, applied provisionally since 2013. Regional cooperation between the EU and the Andean Community aims to help cement regional ties. On 26 April 2021, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the fifth anniversary of the peace agreement in Colombia, requesting increased EU political and financial support for the process. Colombia is the only country in the region with a bilateral agreement with Europol for the exchange of information.

Costa Rica

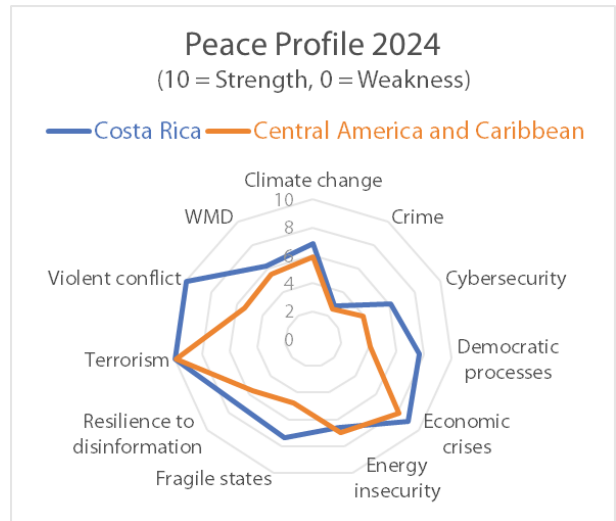
Costa Rica ranks 15th in the Normandy Index, indicating relatively low levels of risk. In contrast to several other countries in the Central America and Caribbean region, Costa Rica has high levels of peace and political stability. Costa Rica has a long history of democratic stability, with smooth transitions of power through free and fair elections.

Background and key issues

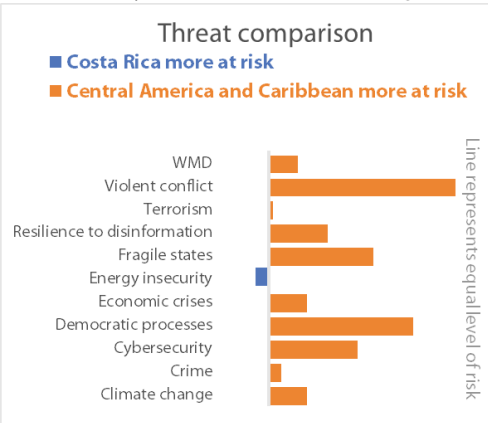
Costa Rica abolished its military in 1948, following the end of an intense civil war. This had positive ramifications for its score on violent conflict and weapons of mass destruction. There is a limited threat of armed conflict within the country, and it enjoys good relations with neighbouring states. Additionally, it ranks among the countries suffering the lowest impact from terrorism. While Costa Rica performs well on other indicators of traditional conflicts, it has relatively [high homicide rates](#). These are attributed to [organised crime](#), endemic to the Central American and Caribbean region.

New security and hybrid threats

Costa Rica has relatively high resilience to new security threats. It has a long-standing and stable democracy and benefits from high levels of press freedom and human rights protections. However,



its [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#) ranking has declined to 26th, mainly owing to [clashes](#) between President Rodrigo Chaves' government and the press. It performs above the regional average for the indicators measuring democratic processes and fragile states. Although Costa Rica performs better on climate change than the regional average, in 2021 it ranked [62nd](#) among the 185 countries most vulnerable to climate change. Costa Rica has made significant efforts to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. It already [generates](#) its entire electricity consumption and more than a third of its energy consumption from [renewables](#).



EU involvement

The EU maintains strong political relations with Costa Rica. Both parties played an active part in the 1984 [San José dialogue](#), in support of the peace process and democratisation efforts in Central America. Cooperation agreements were concluded in 1985 and 1993, and a political dialogue and cooperation agreement in 2003. The [3rd EU-Costa Rica High-level Dialogue](#) was held in November 2019. [Costa Rica](#) is also a signatory to the EU-Central America Association Agreement concluded in 2012. Under the regional 2021-2027 multi-annual indicative programme (MIP) for the Americas and the Caribbean, Costa Rica benefits from EU support on three priorities: decarbonisation and climate change, digitalisation and migration management. Under its [EUROSociAL+](#) programme, the EU [supports](#) public policies in Costa Rica to improve social cohesion and reduce inequality. The EU [Global Gateway](#) initiative specifically fosters production of green hydrogen in Costa Rica, conversion of urban buses to electric and development of vaccine production. The EU also supports new regional approaches through triangular cooperation schemes; for instance, it is working with Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico on strengthening [restorative justice](#).

Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire ranks 85th on the Normandy Index and holds roughly the same rank on individual threats as the region to which it belongs, sub-Saharan Africa. The country suffers political polarisation and is exposed to climate change risks, while terrorism and violent conflict remain issues of serious concern.

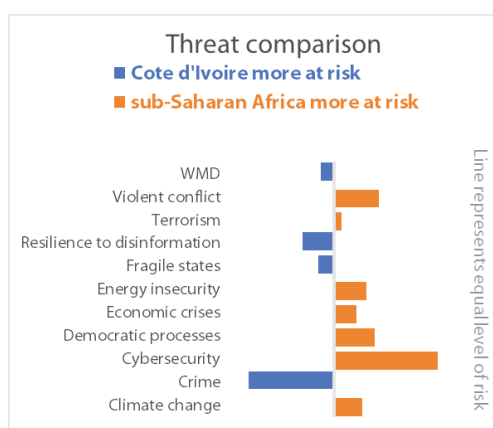
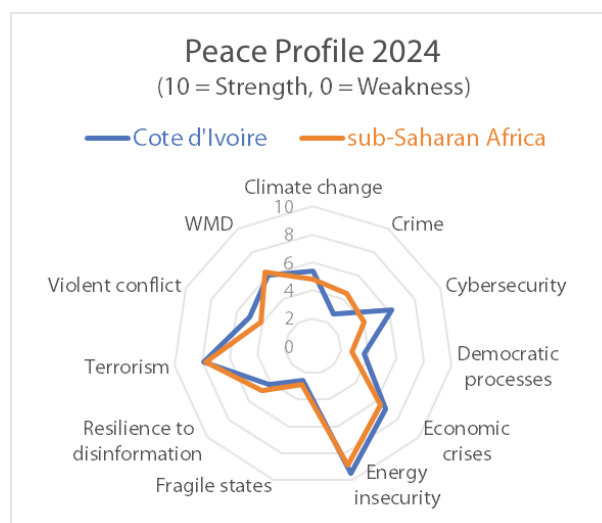
Background and key issues

Côte d'Ivoire was one of Africa's most stable and prosperous countries following its independence. After its first president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, died in 1993, the country plunged into a spiral of instability and violent conflict between the Christian south and the Muslim north. The 2010 electoral victory of current President [Alassane Ouattara](#), who needed the backing of UN and French troops, put an end to the civil conflict. President Ouattara continues to pursue reconciliation with rival politicians, to avoid social unrest ahead of elections in 2025. However, deeper national [reconciliation](#) has been limited, and there has been little progress with investigations into human rights violations that were committed during the country's two civil wars (in 2002-2007 and 2010-2011). Côte d'Ivoire is the second biggest economy in West Africa after Nigeria, and the world's main supplier of cocoa.

New security and hybrid threats

Côte d'Ivoire faces a threat from [Islamist insurgents](#) along its borders. In recent years, the [security situation](#) in the Sahel has degraded significantly due to a multiplication of attacks by non-state armed groups. The risk of terrorist attacks from jihadist organisations such as Malian-based groups

Ansar al-Dine (AAD) and al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) has grown, with a [risk](#) of local radicalisation. The country experienced its first major terrorist [attacks](#) in 2016, in the beach resort of Grand-Bassam. Since 2020, [jihadists](#) have several times attacked security forces at the northern border with Burkina Faso. These new threats also create intercommunal [tension](#). Due to its geographical position, the country is vulnerable to organised crime, particularly trafficking in human beings and drugs, as well as to [maritime piracy](#) in the Gulf of Guinea. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that over 54 000 displaced persons arrived in Côte d'Ivoire, from Burkina Faso and Mali between April 2021 and March 2024.



EU involvement

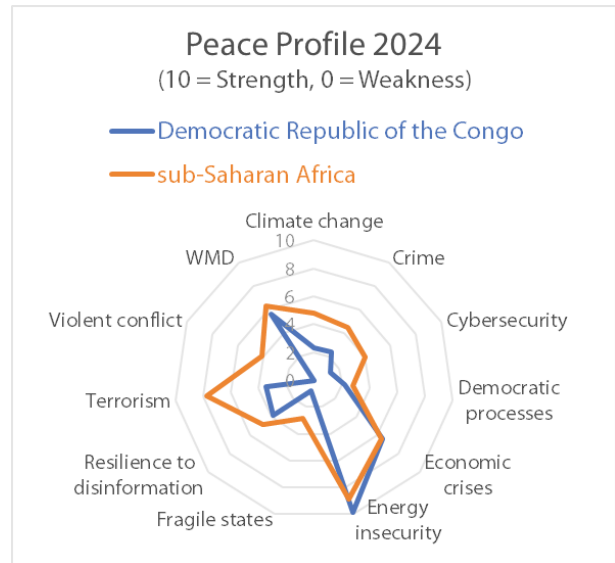
The EU's 2021-2024 multiannual indicative programme ([MIP](#)) for Côte d'Ivoire amounts to €228 million. The EU agreed [priorities](#) with Côte d'Ivoire to structure the flow of EU development aid to the country from the Global Europe Instrument: develop human capital, foster sustainable, inclusive and digital growth, and strengthen the rule of law, democratic governance and preserve peace and security. The EU support aims at upholding Côte d'Ivoire as a major pole of stability in West Africa, while aiming at increasing women's participation in peace and security matters. A total €149.1 million in further funding for peace is provided under the Team Europe 'Peace and Stability' initiative: the EU contributes €29.4 million, France, Germany and Italy being the other main contributors. Since 2016, Côte d'Ivoire is one of only two countries in West Africa to implement an [Economic Partnership Agreement](#) with the EU, which aims at liberalising trade and encouraging economic diversification and development.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The resource-rich Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) ranks towards the bottom of the Normandy Index at 134th position. In December 2023, President Félix Tshisekedi won a second term, while his Union Sacrée coalition swept to a majority in parliament. The political landscape remains deeply divided, and in the east, both Ituri and North Kivu provinces are rocked by instability.

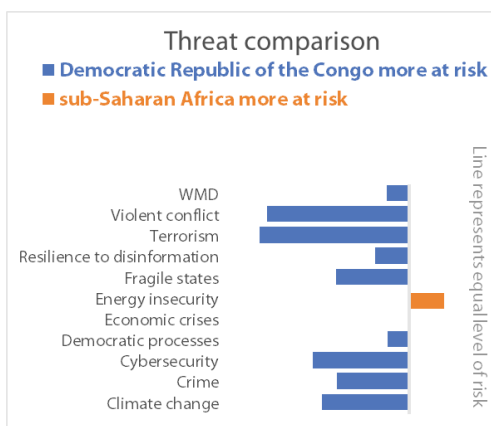
Background and key issues

Despite the ongoing efforts of the UN Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo ([UN MONUSCO](#)), now undertaking a phased withdrawal, the [2023 Fragile States Index](#) still ranks the DRC in 5th place. The DRC was 'highly impacted by terrorism' in 2023, the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#) ranking the country 13th (down from 14th in 2023). In June 2024, the ISIS-affiliated Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel group killed 150 civilians. The DRC remains one of the world's most complex and protracted [humanitarian crises](#), with [7 million](#) internally displaced persons and [over 1 million](#) refugees or asylum seekers in other African countries, mainly in Uganda. In April 2022, the DRC became the 7th member of the East African Community (EAC).



New security and hybrid threats

Joseph Kabila's unconstitutionally long term of office took a toll on democratic processes and press freedom. The country is still [considered](#) at risk, with particular vulnerability to corruption and depletion of its natural resources, including critical raw materials, such as tantalum and cobalt, extracted from DRC mines largely controlled by [Chinese companies](#). President Tshisekedi visited China in May 2023, to renegotiate the 2008 '[Chinese contract](#)' (a 'minerals for infrastructure' scheme). In the eastern province of North Kivu, M23 rebels returned to fight the DRC army (the FARDC) in spring 2022, taking control of several cities and rural areas. Rwanda systematically denies DRC, UN and Western accusations of its support for M23. All de-escalation, peace plans and cease-fire attempts have failed to date. On 22 May 2024, the army, backed by 'patriotic militia' [announced](#) an offensive against M23 positions around Goma. In addition to persistent conflict, [climate change](#) severely impacts food security in the country.



EU involvement

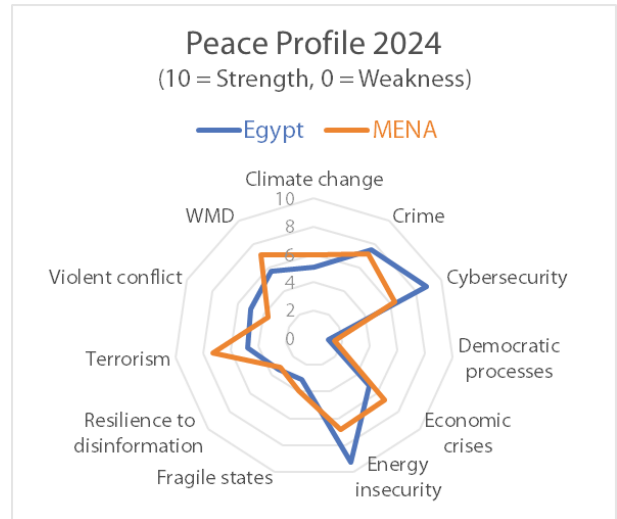
The EU's [relations](#) with the DRC are strained due to sanctions against several Congolese for human rights violations. The DRC benefits from duty-free, quota-free access to the EU market ('[Everything but Arms](#)'). In 2023, EU humanitarian aid to DRC amounted to [€80 million](#) (€44 million in 2022). Past EU development aid to the DRC was financed primarily through the [European Development Fund](#) (€620 million for 2014-2020). The EU financial allocation to DRC under the 2021-2024 Global Europe Instrument amounts to [€424 million](#). EU plans to earmark €30 million in civilian support to the FARDC for the 'United for Security' programme, on top of military support that might be funded from the European Peace Facility. In [July 2023](#), a €20 million assistance measure under the EPF was agreed to support the DRC's armed forces. In October 2023, the EU signed a Memorandum of Understanding on critical raw materials with DRC and Zambia. The EU condemns Rwanda's support for M23, its military in eastern DRC, and DRC's support for armed groups.

Egypt

Egypt ranks 90th on the Normandy Index. Elected in 2014, 2018 and again in 2023, President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi won his third six-year term with 89.6 % of the vote. Egypt has strong energy security. Security issues, such as the spill-over of the Israel-Hamas war and the Islamic terrorist threat in North Sinai, remain high risk. Increasing debt, inflation and devaluation lead to a weak economic performance.

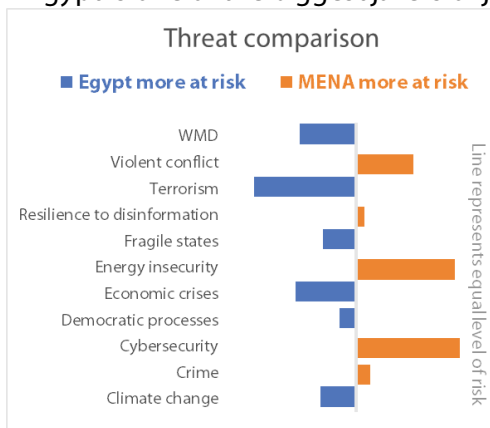
Background and key issues

The [2023 Fragile States Index](#) ranks Egypt 50th, due to its human rights record and Islamic terrorism in the country. The [military](#) remains the predominant political force. Since 2014, the Wilayat Sinai, or 'Sinai Province' (ISIL/Da'esh in the Sinai Peninsula) [terrorist group](#) has conducted a prolonged insurgency against Egyptian authorities. In 2022, the Cairo Criminal Court and the Emergency Supreme State Security [sentenced](#) former presidential candidate Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh and the Muslim Brotherhood's former supreme guide Mahmoud Ezzat to 15 years in prison. Egypt holds 77 trillion cubic feet of proven [gas reserves](#), ranking 16th in the world. In line with the [REPowerEU plan](#), the EU and Egypt will accelerate and intensify their [energy partnership](#).



New security and hybrid threats

Egypt is one of the biggest jailers of journalists, ranking 166th of 180 countries on the [2023 World Press Freedom Index](#). Climate conditions also represent a major challenge. The vast majority (98 %) of Egypt's approximately 95 million people live in the arable Nile valley and delta, which represents only 3 % of the country's total landmass. Egypt faces an [annual water deficit](#) of around 7 billion cubic metres. [Soil salinisation](#) threatens 15 % of the country's farmland. President al-Sisi has pushed for economic and political reform, at the core of which lies Egypt's 'Vision 2030'. The Central Bank of Egypt [devalued](#) the pound by 17 % and raised its main interest rate in 2022. However, the Egyptian pound continued to fall in 2023-2024.



EU involvement

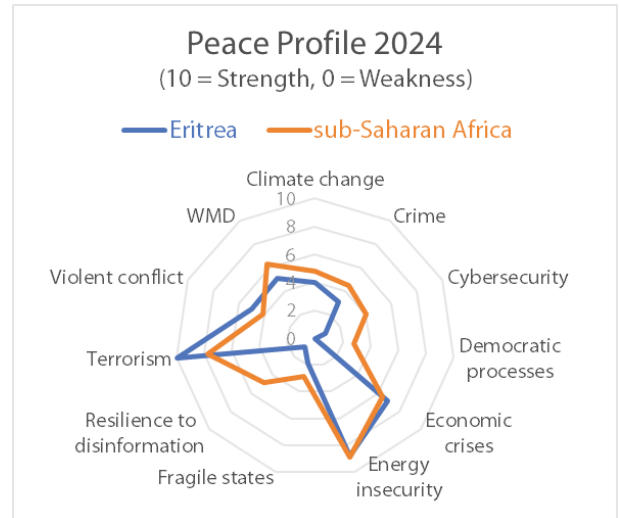
A 2001 Association Agreement, which entered into force in June 2004, forms the legal basis for EU-Egypt relations. Relations were further strengthened through the jointly agreed [EU-Egypt action plan](#) adopted in 2007, which helped to develop political, social and economic bilateral relations. In the context of the [revised European Neighbourhood](#) policy, the EU and Egypt have adopted [partnership priorities](#) that guided the partnership in 2017-2020. The EU's [assistance](#) to Egypt will now focus on economic modernisation, energy sustainability and the environment; social development and social protection; as well as governance. In February 2021, the EU adopted a [new agenda for the Mediterranean](#), including a €7 billion investment plan for the region. On 19 June 2022, the 9th meeting of the [EU-Egypt Association Council](#) adopted new partnership priorities to guide relations until 2027, in line with the new agenda for the Mediterranean and its economic and investment plan and Egypt's Vision 2030 strategy. The HR/VP [visited](#) Egypt on 17-19 June 2023, holding high-level meetings with President al-Sisi and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sameh Hassan Shoukry. A €7.4 billion [EU-Egypt Strategic and Comprehensive Partnership](#) was agreed on 17 March 2024, to help boost Egypt's faltering economy and combat irregular migration. Egypt is host to some 9 million international irregular migrants, in particular from Sudan, and around 480 000 registered refugees and asylum-seekers.

Eritrea

Eritrea ranks 126th in the Normandy Index. Eritrea suffers from a total lack of democratic practices and political freedom. Relations with most third countries, including donors, are strained. Eritrean forces are allegedly involved in war crimes in Ethiopia's Tigray region.

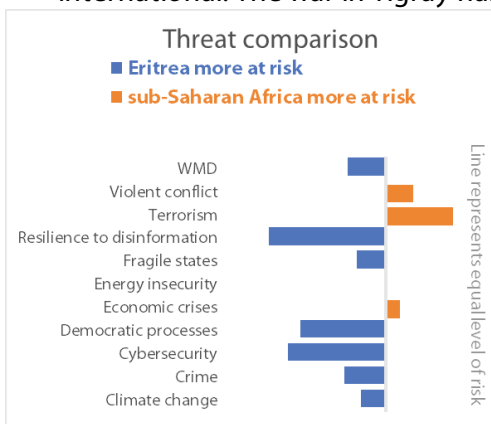
Background and key issues

President Isaias Afwerki has led a [militarised authoritarian](#) state since independence from Ethiopia in 1993. No national election has been held since then, and the 1997 Constitution has never been fully implemented. The government cracks down on perceived opponents with mass arrests, detaining them for years without trial and in brutal conditions. All citizens between 18 and 50 years – male and female – must accomplish a national service, theoretically for an 18-month period. Frequent abuses linked to the age limits, duration, and conditions of national service have been reported by the [UN special rapporteur](#) on Eritrea. The national service deprives many households of the means to an income. The added impact of droughts, floods and locust infestation means many Eritreans are marginalised. As a result, nearly 1 in 6 Eritreans have [fled](#) the country. In a small step towards emerging from international diplomatic isolation, Eritrea [rejoined](#) the East African Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in June 2023.



New security and hybrid threats

Eritrea sent forces, reportedly including conscripts, to support the Ethiopian offensive in Ethiopia's [Tigray](#) region in 2022. The withdrawal of 'foreign troops' was part of the November 2022 peace deal between Tigray and the federal government. However, Eritrea was not part of the negotiations and its forces reportedly 'continued to commit serious [rights violations](#)', amounting to '[war crimes](#) and possible crimes against humanity' in Tigray, according to Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The war in Tigray has gravely impacted the 100 000 [Eritrean refugees](#) hosted in the



region, as they were caught in the crossfire between various armed groups, and even targeted and kidnapped by Eritrean forces. Eritrea was the only African country to vote at the UN against the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine. In April 2024, a [Russian delegation](#) visited Eritrea for talks and military exercises. Allegedly, Russia sees Eritrea as an option to get a permanent foothold in the Red Sea, as Sudan is in civil war. A Russian military presence in the Red Sea would secure Russian interests and give it a more prominent role in Middle Eastern geopolitics. Reporters without Borders [highlight](#) major threats to press freedom, media pluralism and journalists in the country.

EU involvement

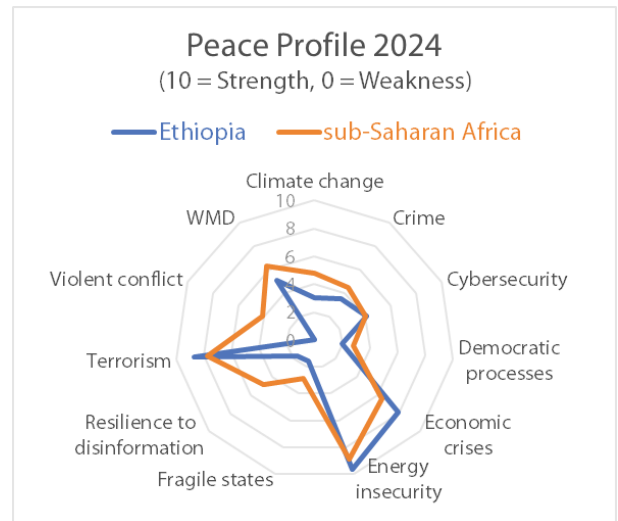
In the framework of its [comprehensive strategy for the Horn of Africa](#), the EU promotes regional cooperation on migration and displacement, security, and the fight against violent extremism. The EU and Eritrea are part of the [EU-Horn of Africa migration route initiative](#), a policy dialogue on the fight against irregular migration. In 2021, the EU [suspended](#) development cooperation with Eritrea due to the country's involvement in the Tigray conflict. The EU provides humanitarian aid to Eritreans in refugee camps in neighbouring countries, notably in Ethiopia.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia ranks 122th on the Normandy Index. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali's first months in office were marked by successful efforts to resolve ongoing disputes with Eritrea and introduce wide-ranging political and economic reform. However, the armed conflict in Tigray and violent insurgencies in Amhara and Oromia have severely affected risk levels in the country.

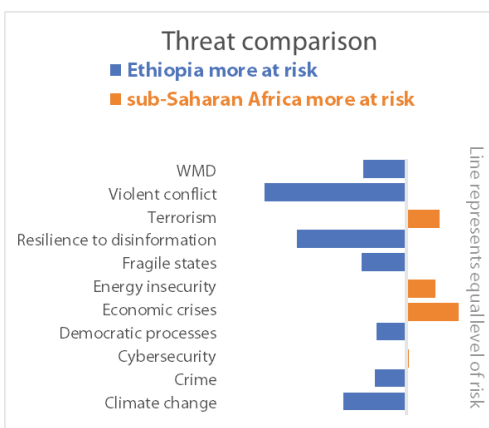
Background and key issues

With over [80 different ethnic groups](#), speaking as many languages, Ethiopian politics are structured around the notion of ethnic federalism. Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed [received](#) the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019 for his efforts to resolve long-standing disputes with Eritrea. In 2020, a dispute between the Tigrayan regional government and the federal government escalated into [civil war](#), with a death toll of possibly over 600 000. More than 5 million people in Tigray need food assistance and another 5 million have been displaced, either internally or into neighbouring countries. The situation remains [tense](#), despite the [peace agreement](#) signed between the Ethiopian government and Tigrayan forces in November 2022.



New security and hybrid threats

Regional [tensions](#) have flared in the country. Oromia's regional army sided with the Tigrayans, while Amhara and Afar militia reportedly supported federal troops. Despite these alliances, the federal government decided to dismantle regional security forces, triggering violent protests in the [Amhara](#) region. A series of peace talks began in 2023, with no positive outcome so far. Violence has resulted in a severe deterioration of the already fragile [humanitarian situation](#) in northern Ethiopia. The filling of the [Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam](#) on the River Nile remains a point of tension with [Egypt](#), while Sudan hopes this dam will help regulate floods. Tensions sparked between Ethiopia and the Somali federal government, after the autonomous Somaliland state signed a deal giving [sea access](#) to Ethiopia in exchange for potentially recognising Somaliland's independence. This deal might further destabilise the entire Horn of Africa. At the same time, Ethiopia is at [high risk](#) of further destabilisation due to natural disaster, including both flooding and drought.



EU involvement

Ethiopia was considered a key partner for the renewed [EU strategy in the Horn of Africa](#)— adopted in March 2021, but prepared before the outbreak of the Tigray conflict. The EU's partnership with Ethiopia is based on a 2016 Joint Strategic Engagement Agreement, providing for annual ministerial meetings and high-level dialogue on six sectors: regional peace and security; countering terrorism and violent radicalisation; migration, social and economic development; investment and trade; governance and human rights; climate change and environmental cooperation. Due to the conflict in Tigray, the EU [suspended](#) its €88 million budget support to Ethiopia and increased humanitarian funding in parallel. On 24 April 2023, the Council of the EU announced that the EU will progressively return to full engagement with Ethiopia, as the peace deal is implemented. The EU provided €84.5 million in humanitarian support for Ethiopia in 2023, and €40.6 million in 2024 (as of 15 May). At the same time, on 29 April 2024, the EU restricted visas for Ethiopian nationals, due to 'insufficient' Ethiopian cooperation in [readmission](#) of its nationals illegally staying in the EU.

Georgia

Georgia ranks 30th in the Normandy Index, an improvement on its 35th place in 2023. The country stills performs better than the regional average on indicators including terrorism and economic crisis, while it performs poorly on violent conflict indicators, due to conflict in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

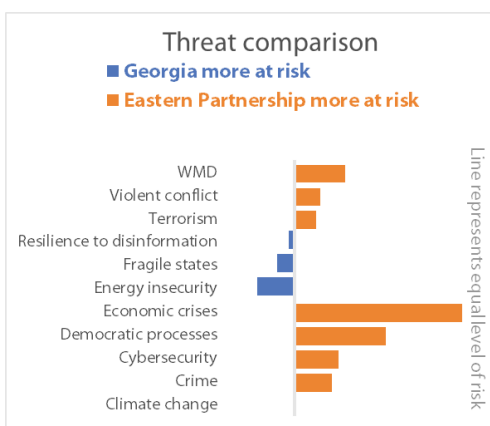
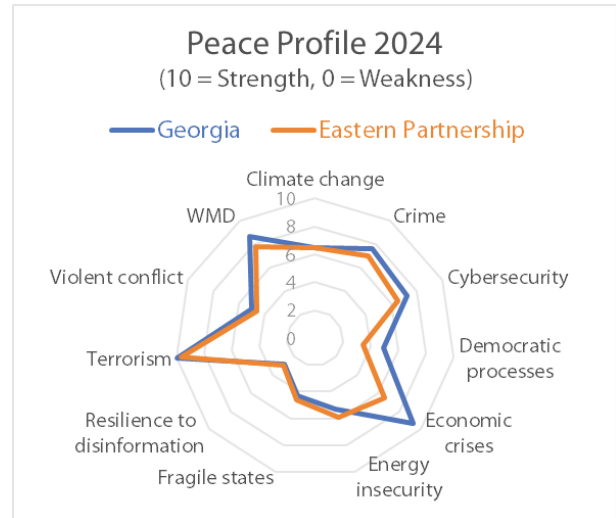
Background and key issues

Since Georgia's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, its government has faced separatist movements in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In 2008, Russia fought a war with Georgia, on the pretext of protecting separatists. Although fighting ended quickly, the causes of the conflict are unresolved and Georgia lost control of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The Russian Federation now [recognises](#) them as sovereign entities, and has established [three military bases](#) there with at least 15 000 Russian troops. Georgia has experienced relatively low levels of terrorism in the past five years, the 2022 [Global Terrorism Index](#) ranks it 93rd. Georgia has been [embroiled](#) in political instability since contested parliamentary elections in November 2020, where the ruling party, Georgian Dream (in power since 2012), maintained its majority. Three months after being granted EU candidate status ([December 2023](#)), the government [decided](#) to re-table the Russian-inspired 'transparency of foreign influence' law, [withdrawn](#) the previous year amid mass protests. The move sparked [massive contestation](#) and a wave of repression, [condemned](#) by human rights organisations. The law is seen as [incompatible](#) with EU core norms and values and hampers Georgia's path to join the EU.

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New security and hybrid threats

Georgia ranks highest among the Eastern Partnership countries on the Normandy Index economic crisis indicator, and although hard-hit by the pandemic, its economy is resilient. [Reform](#) over the past 15 years focused on globalising the business sector, boosting economic growth and diversifying trade. While neighbouring Russia, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan and Türkiye remain the main export destinations, Georgia expanded ties with China and boosted links with the EU through an [Association Agreement](#) (AA), including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), and committed to the NATO Response Force. Georgia has also increased its resilience in other areas, such as cybersecurity. The 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine raised security [fears](#) in Georgia, which has followed a [cautious](#) approach towards Russia. Georgia [voted](#) with the EU on UN resolutions against Russia, but [refuses](#) to apply EU sanctions. Georgia has no significant fossil fuel [resources](#) and scores lower than the regional average on energy security, which it is undertaking energy transition reform to improve. The reform framework is defined by Georgia's EU Association Agreement.



EU involvement

The EU continues its firm [support](#) for Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including through the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia (EUSR), the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM), and through the [European Peace Facility](#) (€30 million) which covers medical, logistics and cyber-defence equipment. Georgia was granted EU candidate status in December 2023, on the understanding that the country takes the steps set out in the Commission [recommendation](#) of 8 November 2023.

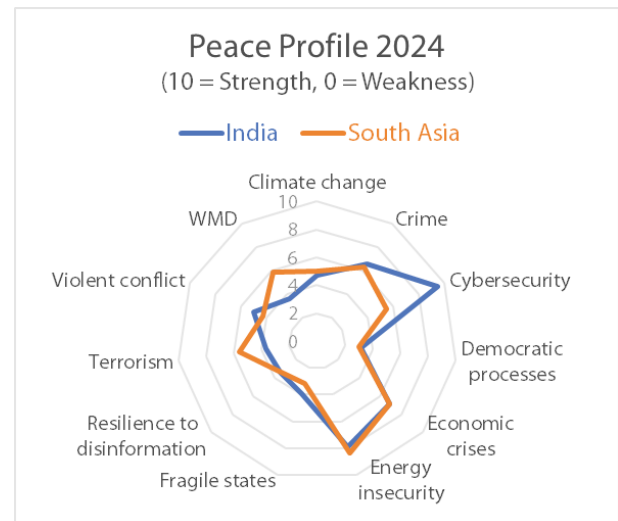
India

India ranks 93rd on the Normandy Index: an advance of almost 30 positions compared with 2023. It is considered less at risk than the average for southern Asia, except for the nuclear threat and terrorism. India has unresolved territorial disputes with China and Pakistan, both nuclear powers.

Background and key issues

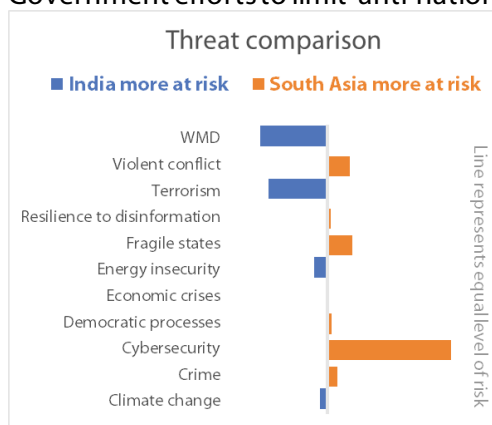
Despite strong economic growth and modernisation since the 1990s, an [estimated](#) 34 million Indians live in extreme poverty. Domestically, India is challenged by [ongoing](#) inter-religious, inter-caste and inter-ethnic disputes, leading to communal violence, such as clashes in [Manipur](#). [Gender inequality](#) is also a challenge. In 2023, India ranks in the bottom 50% of countries on the [Liberal Democracy Index](#), [declining](#) substantially in democratic freedom in the past decade due to discriminatory policies affecting the [Muslim](#) population and barriers to political opposition. India is in [dispute](#) with China over the Himalayan border.

[Tensions](#) with Pakistan, mainly over [Kashmir](#), have given rise to Islamist terrorist groups operating from Pakistan. India ranked 14th on the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#). India is opposed to signing the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty ([NPT](#)), the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ([CTBT](#)) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons ([TPNW](#)), giving it a low score for the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) indicator. India condemned Hamas' terrorist attack against Israel in October 2023, then joined an UNGA resolution calling for an immediate [humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza](#), and later supported the [Palestinian bid for UN membership](#).



New security and hybrid threats

Government efforts to limit 'anti-national' discourse led to India falling to 159th place on the [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#). While India is a target of cyber-attacks, it performs strongly on [cybersecurity](#). India is at high risk from [climate change](#), with [some regions](#) and sectors, such as [agriculture](#), especially vulnerable to flooding, rising temperatures and declining rainfall. India ranked 7th best on the 2024 [Climate Change Performance Index](#), with high ratings on [emissions](#) and energy use. A top importer of military equipment in 2019-2023, India is the largest importer of arms from Russia (although this trend is waning). India did [not condemn](#) Russia's invasion of Ukraine; imports of Russian oil [rose](#) 13-fold in 2022-2023.



EU involvement

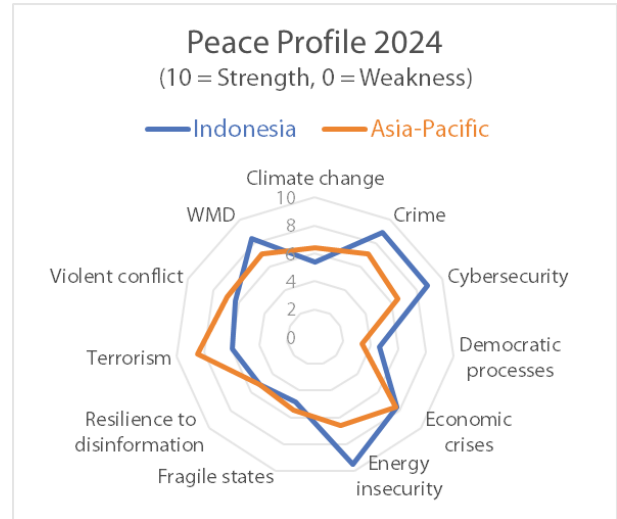
India and the EU have been strategic partners since 2004. A middle-income country, [India](#) is not eligible for bilateral EU assistance, however it can benefit from the thematic and [Asian](#) regional programmes. The July 2020 [15th EU-India Summit](#) endorsed a common '[roadmap](#) until 2025'. The EU is India's [second largest](#) trade partner, accounting for almost 11% of Indian trade. The May 2021 EU-India leaders' meeting agreed to resume negotiations on a [free trade agreement](#), and launched an [EU-India Connectivity Partnership](#). An [EU-India Trade and Technology Council](#) was set up in February 2023, to tackle new trade, technology and security challenges. On the margins of the G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023, the EU, India and other partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).

Indonesia

Indonesia ranks 22nd on the Normandy Index. Significant economic growth in this populous country of 270 million inhabitants has raised its political prominence in the region, in particular within the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). This rise has not been without issues: ongoing Islamic fundamentalism, sectarian unrest and slowly eroding democratic processes each pose significant challenges.

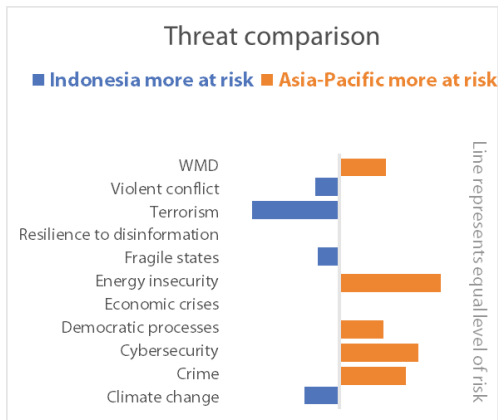
Background and key issues

Indonesia has faced a number of separatist and militant movements since its independence in 1949, and now ranks 31st on the 2024 [Global Terrorism Index](#), an improvement on 2023, although a long-running insurgency [continues](#) in Papua. A 2005 agreement granting special autonomy brought peace to Aceh province. Indonesian counter-terrorist forces have largely contained Islamist movements such as Jemaah Islamiyah, a Sunni Islamist, religiously-motivated and violent extremist group, inspired by anti-Western jihadist ideology. Although law-enforcement activities have significantly impaired the group's leadership over the past decade, it [remains](#) a distinct organisation with a highly compartmentalised structure and 6 000 members, operating primarily in Indonesia.



New security and hybrid threats

Although in terms of democratic processes, Indonesia still performs better than the regional average, observers point to slow erosion, especially regarding women's [freedom of discussion](#). Press freedom in Indonesia also declined, with the country's [World Press Freedom Index](#) ranking falling from 108th to 111th on 2023. Indonesia ranks 98th on the 2023 [Fragile States Index](#), with a particularly high score in the 'group grievances' category. This is largely due to ongoing unrest in the province of Papua, where media access is restricted. Strong earthquakes and regular volcanic activity, such as the Mont Ibu eruptions in 2024, underline Indonesia's vulnerability to environmental and climate factors. Increasing drought frequency is [predicted](#) to threaten Indonesia's monsoon-based agricultural practices and lead to food shortages, while rising ocean levels are forecast to threaten approximately 42 million low-lying households, especially around the capital, Jakarta.



EU involvement

In 2014, Indonesia became the first South-East Asian country to [sign](#) a partnership and cooperation agreement with the EU. The EU officially [launched negotiations](#) with Indonesia on a free trade agreement on 18 July 2016. The 16th round was held from 4 to 8 December 2023 in Brussels. As a middle-income country, Indonesia no longer receives EU bilateral aid, but continues to participate in programmes such as [Erasmus+](#) for higher education. EU funding also supports Indonesia's foreign trade through the ASEAN Regional Integration Support from the EU ([ARISE Plus](#)) facility. The EU and Indonesia conduct a wide range of policy dialogues on topics such as [human rights](#) and [security](#). As a regional leader, Indonesia is key to the EU's strategic partnership with ASEAN.

Iran

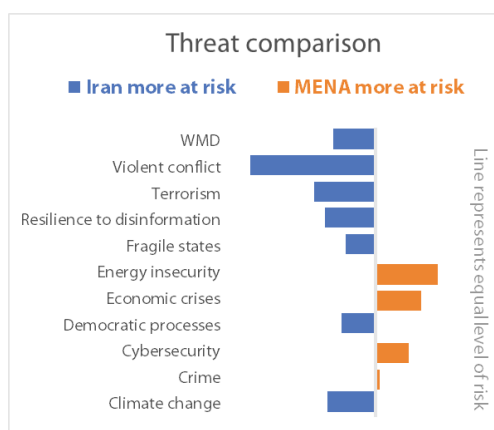
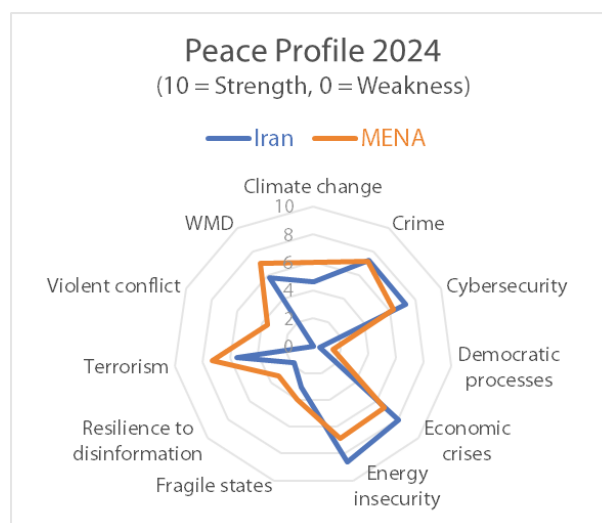
Iran ranks 110th on the Normandy Index. The country is currently experiencing the deepest and longest economic crisis in its modern history, exacerbated by US economic sanctions, re-imposed at the end of 2018, and the subsequent impact on oil exports, inflation and unemployment.

Background and key issues

Iran has been embroiled in conflict in neighbouring countries, from the Iran-Iraq war in 1980, to Syria, Yemen and Israel today (Iran has long refused to recognise Israel's right to exist). The country came under increasing [international pressure](#) over its WMD capabilities and intentions, held in check by the Iran [nuclear deal](#) (the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#), or JCPOA), signed in 2015, until the USA withdrew from the agreement and re-imposed wide-ranging [economic sanctions](#) in 2018. Iran's break-out time – the time required to produce enough enriched uranium for a nuclear bomb – is believed to be down to a [few weeks](#), or less.

New security and hybrid threats

[Real GDP growth](#) shrank to 3.8% year on year in 2022/2023, but accelerated to 5.1% in the first half of 2023/2024, thanks to the oil and services sectors. Improved economic governance and the fight against widespread corruption are among the country's [key political challenges](#). Iran ranks 149th out of 180 countries on the [2023 Corruption Perception Index](#). The regime harshly repressed widespread [demonstrations](#) against the [Islamic Republic system](#) following the death in police custody of Mahsa Amini (a young woman arrested for violating the female dress code). Amidst the



ongoing Israel-Hamas war, tensions between Iran and Israel have worsened. In retaliation for targeting its structures abroad, Iran attacked Israeli territory for the first time in April 2024, with Israel [reciprocating](#) by targeting the [area](#) next to Iran's nuclear infrastructure on its territory. The moderate Masoud Pezeshkian, who has pledged to open Iran to the world and deliver fundamental freedoms its people have yearned for, won the country's run-off [presidential election](#) in July 2024. While the election is expected to have little impact on the Islamic Republic's policies, the president will be closely involved in selecting the successor to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's 85-year-old Supreme Leader.

EU involvement

The EU played an important role in facilitating the nuclear agreement between Iran and the EU3+3 (France, Germany and the United Kingdom (UK), plus China, Russia and the USA). Following the [endorsement](#) of the JCPOA in July 2015, the EU established an Iran Task Force (now called the [Iran Division](#)), to coordinate the different strands of action in relations with Iran (including the implementation of the JCPOA). In October 2023, in view of Iran failing to fulfil its commitments under the JCPOA, the EU [decided](#) not to lift further [sanctions](#) as originally envisaged. The multiannual indicative programme, ([MIP](#)), which the EU adopted in 2021, governs relations with Iran from 2021 to 2027. However, due to political constraints, joint programming is not currently taking place. The European Parliament awarded the 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom movement in Iran.

Iraq

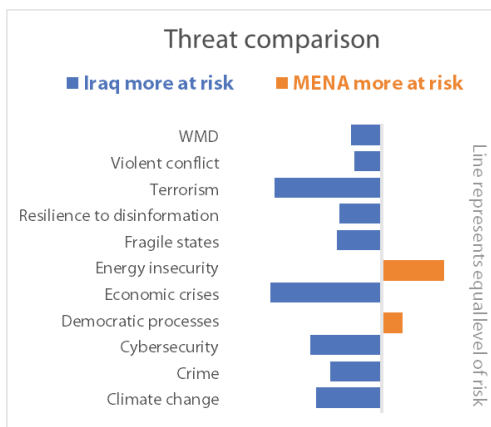
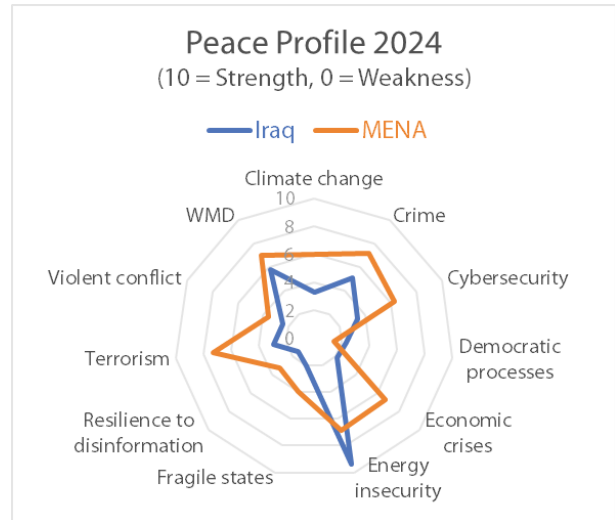
Iraq ranks 130th on the Normandy Index. More than 20 years after the beginning of the US invasion in March 2003, the country suffers from a volatile security situation with a protracted humanitarian and development crisis, characterised by economic crisis, corruption, energy shortage and sectarianism.

Background and key issues

Iraq has a history of [military coups and revolutions](#). When Saddam Hussein seized power in 1979, Iraq became embroiled in a series of conflicts, starting with the Iran-Iraq war in 1980. In 1989, Iraq invaded neighbouring Kuwait, beginning the first Gulf War. In 2003, claiming Iraq had WMD capabilities, a coalition led by the USA again invaded the country, provoking a power struggle among rival factions that continues today. The [US troops](#) left in 2011, but returned in 2014, as part of the US-led coalition fighting ISIL/Da'esh. In the months leading up to their [withdrawal](#) in [December 2021](#), US troops and interests in Iraq were the target of dozens of [attacks](#), attributed to pro-Iranian Iraqi factions. Since 2003, [Iran](#) has [established](#) a strong [destabilising](#) influence over Iraq. Some [1.14 million](#) people remain internally [displaced](#) and [2.5 million](#) people need humanitarian assistance. Although armed violence has declined, the terrorist threat and small-scale military operations result in a volatile security situation.

New security and hybrid threats

From 2019 to 2021, Iraq witnessed [massive protests](#) against ineffective governance, which were often [violently suppressed](#). Following early parliamentary [elections](#) in October 2021, it took [two years](#) to appoint a new prime minister. While Iraq is currently enjoying relative stability and the government's budgetary flexibility has improved due to [increased](#) oil revenue, it continues to struggle to deliver improved public services and employment opportunities. However, Iran-backed Iraqi militia [attacks](#) on US positions inside Iraq amid the Israel-Hamas war risk undermine these security gains. Iraq is the [11th](#) most terrorism-impacted country in the world, even though the country witnessed a 65 % reduction in terrorism deaths in 2023. Iraq is one of the Arab countries most [vulnerable to climate change](#), and will likely face reduced [water and food availability](#) and extreme temperatures in the future. On 3 July 2023, Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid [revoked](#) a special presidential decree granting Chaldean Catholic Patriarch Louis Raphaël Sako power to administer Chaldean endowment affairs as the head of the Chaldean Church. On 5 June 2024, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani [reinstated](#) Raphaël Sako as the Chaldean Patriarch.



EU involvement

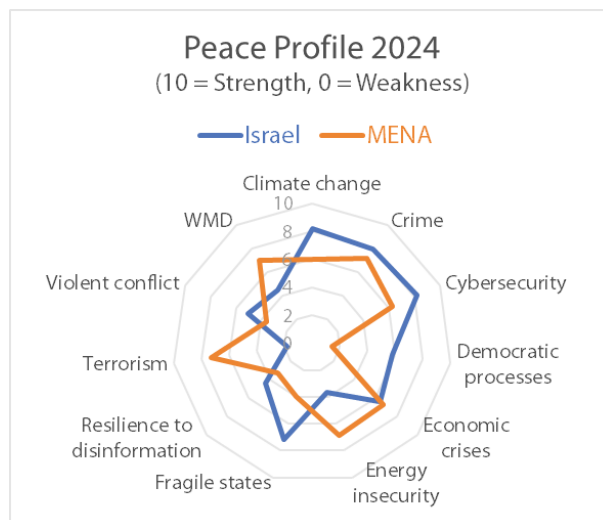
Under the 2018 [EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement](#) (PCA), the EU [cooperates](#) with Iraq in many areas, including humanitarian assistance, stabilisation, reconstruction, human rights, migration, security, and political, social and economic reform agendas. The EU adopted an [EU strategy for Iraq](#) in January 2018, to respond to the specific challenges Iraq faces following the territorial defeat of ISIL/Da'esh. Iraq has benefited from over €1.3 billion in EU assistance since 2014. CSDP EU advisory mission, [EUAM Iraq](#), set up in October 2017, aims to assist the Iraqi authorities to implement its national security strategy.

Israel

Israel ranks 71st on the Normandy Index, after a sharp 12-position fall since 2023. This decline can largely be attributed to the Israel-Hamas conflict following the 7 October 2023 terrorist attack on Israel, and to confrontation with Iran and Iran-backed groups. While Israel ranks high on resilience against non-traditional threats, the country's possession of WMD undermines its score.

Background and key issues

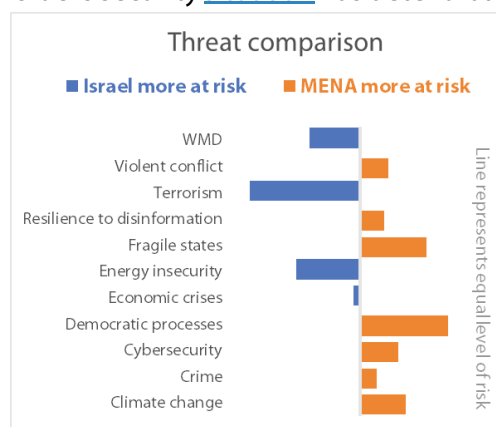
Israel has been in [conflict](#) with the Palestinians and its other Arab neighbours since the UNGA voted to partition Palestine in 1947. Following earlier peace treaties with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994), Israel [normalised](#) relations with four other Arab states in 2020. However, relations with direct neighbours [Lebanon](#) and [Syria](#) deteriorated after the 7 October 2023 Hamas attack. Israel's retaliation against Hamas also [resulted](#) in halting talks to normalise Israel-Saudi relations. The [2024 Freedom in the World Index](#) categorises Israel as a free country, but notes that the political leadership discriminates against Arab and other ethnic and religious minorities. In 2023, Israel continued its decade-long



occupation of the West Bank, [intensifying](#) military operations and incursions. Israel ranks 2nd on the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#), compared to 25th in 2023. Besides Hamas, [terrorist groups](#) Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and the [Sinai Province of ISIL/Da'esh](#) target Israel. Israel is [not party](#) to any major treaty governing the non-proliferation of WMD. Israel has a [non-transparency](#) regarding its nuclear capabilities, but is thought to have a sizeable nuclear weapons arsenal, ballistic and cruise missiles. Its location in a high-conflict region makes WMD a significant threat.

New security and hybrid threats

Israel's security [situation](#) has deteriorated since the Hamas attack. Confrontation with Iran's 'axis of



of resistance' and the threat of regional escalation are serious concerns. Amidst Israel's ongoing war in Gaza, the country is also combating Lebanon's [Hezbollah](#), supported by Iran, on Israel's northern border. In 'solidarity with the Palestinians', Iran-backed Houthi militia in Yemen are firing missiles at Israel and Israel-bound ships in the [Red Sea](#). On 13-14 April 2024, Iran struck Israeli territory directly for the [first time](#), using 320 drones, ballistic and cruise missiles, in retaliation for the alleged Israeli [strike](#) on the Iranian consulate in Damascus.

EU involvement

EU-Israel relations are governed by the 2000 [EU-Israel Association Agreement](#) and focus on strengthening economic and social cooperation, as well as regular political dialogue. The [European Neighbourhood Policy](#), the main framework guiding political and economic relations with Israel, promotes Israel's integration into European policies and programmes. [EU funds](#) are mostly used to support the approximation of Israeli norms and standards in public administration with those of the EU. The EU supports civil society initiatives promoting human rights. Israel is a [partner](#) in [Horizon Europe](#) and [participates](#) in the [Erasmus+](#) programme. The EU [advocates](#) a two-state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including ending Israeli occupation of the Palestinian [territories](#). In June 2022, the EU, Egypt and Israel signed a [memorandum of understanding](#) on cooperation on trade, transport and natural gas exports to the EU.

Kazakhstan

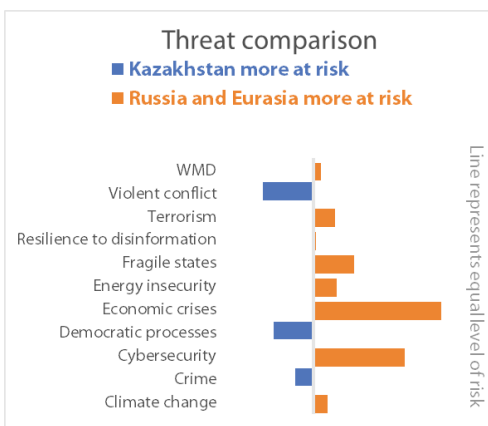
Kazakhstan ranks 47th on the Normandy Index. While stability has returned following internal crisis in 2022, the slow pace of reform, socio-economic inequality, the country's geopolitical situation and climate change are sources of insecurity.

Background and key issues

A former Soviet republic, Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991. [Serving](#) five terms, President Nursultan Nazarbayev stepped down in March 2019. Nazarbayev retained significant influence until 2022, when constitutional reforms instigated by his successor, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, removed his remaining powers. Kazakhstan is dominated by the ruling [Amanat](#) party, and political opposition is routinely [repressed](#). Parliamentary and local elections were held under a [reformed system](#) in 2023, but Amanat retained its [majority](#). The country [remains](#) far from a liberal democracy, [ranking](#) in the bottom 20-30% globally. While growing, the Kazakh economy is highly dependent on oil exports, posing an economic risk and potential source of instability. A key challenge for Kazakhstan is [managing](#) its relationship with its neighbour, Russia. [Around](#) 23% of the Kazakh population is ethnic Russian. Russia's war on Ukraine has [revived](#) fears of threats to Kazakhstan's territorial integrity and made the country a target for Russian [disinformation](#).

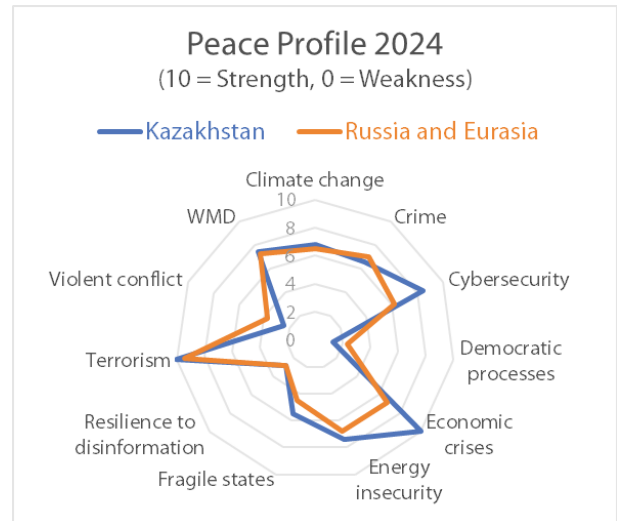
New security and hybrid threats

In January 2022, Kazakhstan experienced major civil unrest when the removal of fuel subsidies sparked peaceful anti-government protests that [spread](#) across the country and [escalated](#) into violence by groups close to local elites. At least 238 people died during the protests, which ended after the imposition of a state of emergency and [military support](#) from the Collective Security Treaty



EU involvement

The EU has supported Kazakhstan's development since it gained independence in 1991. The EU is Kazakhstan's largest trade [partner](#). In 2015, the EU signed an enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement ([EPCA](#)), with Kazakhstan, the first of its kind with a Central Asian partner. The agreement, which entered into force in 2020, enables cooperation in key policy areas such as justice and home affairs, as well as economic and financial cooperation. The EU and Kazakhstan are also implementing a [strategic partnership](#) on raw materials, batteries and renewable hydrogen. The country is covered by the EU's [Central Asia strategy](#) and Special [Representative](#) for Central Asia. Here, cooperation covers security, rule of law, environment, water, climate change, education, and human rights.



Organization (CSTO). [Two years](#) later, human rights organisations are still [calling](#) for greater accountability for [violations](#) of human rights by the [authorities](#) during the protests. The [slow pace](#) of political reform, high [inflation](#), and [discontent](#) over [inequality](#), the [cost of living](#) and [corruption](#) remain destabilising factors. More positively, Kazakhstan [abolished](#) the death penalty in 2020 and [criminalised](#) domestic violence in 2024. The country scores highly on resilience against terrorism, ranking 89th on the [Global Terrorism Index](#). In the spring of 2024, Kazakhstan suffered from [unprecedented floods](#) that experts warn are linked to climate change, increasing risks in a country already [prone to natural disaster](#).

Kosovo*

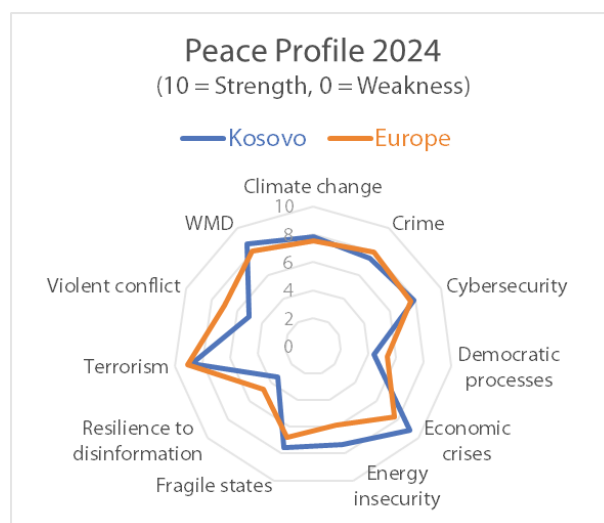
Kosovo, with a population of 1.5 million in 2024, unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008. Kosovo's prospect of a European future has been affirmed at EU-Western Balkans summits. The country is engaged in EU-mediated political dialogue with Serbia since 2011. It ranks 18th on the Normandy Index, lower than the overall European average, in particular on violent conflict, resilience to disinformation and democratic processes indicators.

Background and key issues

In 2008, the EU [declared](#) its willingness to assist in Kosovo's economic and political development, by providing it with a clear European outlook. Kosovo is a [potential candidate](#) for EU accession. However, despite some success in implementing the EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement, in force since 2016, the country's path to EU integration has proved rather slow, mainly owing to internal political instability and an unresolved [bilateral dispute with Serbia](#).

New security and hybrid threats

The 2024 census showed the [country's population](#)



was about 1.5 million, down from 1.74 million in 2011. The work of the Kosovo Assembly continues to be negatively [affected](#) by a polarised political atmosphere and difficulties in achieving a decision-making quorum, despite the government's strong majority. Kosovo is at an early stage in developing a well-functioning judicial system and in confronting corruption and organised crime. It therefore has a weak ranking on democratic processes. The risk of violent conflict remains high. The tense situation with the Serb minority in particular, remains a concern, despite some advances on the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue, such as the March 2023 Ohrid Agreement.

EU involvement

Together with other Western Balkan countries, Kosovo shares the prospect of a European future, as stated at the 2003 EU-Western Balkans Summit in [Thessaloniki](#). The European Commission issued a communication on [A European Future for Kosovo](#) in April 2005. Although many challenges lie ahead, with many challenges ahead, in particular normalisation of relations with Serbia, Kosovo remains a potential/pre-candidate country. On 18 March 2023, Kosovo and Serbia further committed to implementing the [annex](#) to the 11-point EU-proposed [Agreement on the path to normalisation between Kosovo and Serbia](#). Besides being part of the [EU-facilitated dialogue](#) aimed at normalising relations between Belgrade and Pristina, this agreement is likely to influence both countries' EU accession process favourably, as the [commitments](#) made in Ohrid will be incorporated into their respective accession negotiations. A mutually acceptable solution must be based on UN Security Council [resolution 1244 \(1999\)](#) and endorsed by the UN Security Council. The EU contributes to stability in Kosovo by means of the [EULEX rule of law mission](#), and through its [special representative](#), responsible for the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue and other regional issues.

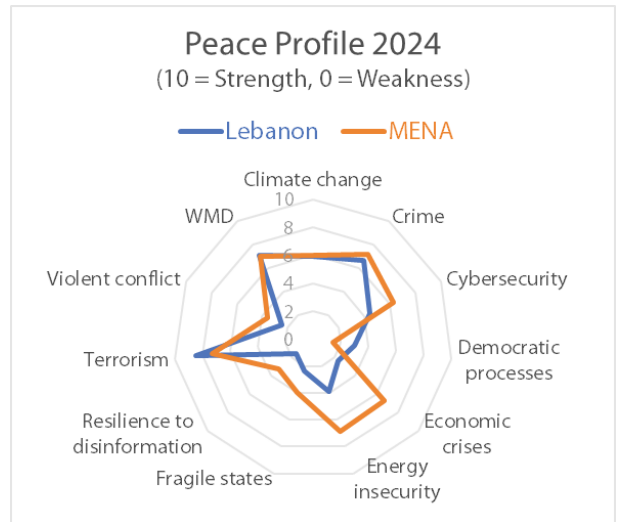
*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

Lebanon

Lebanon ranks 121st on the Normandy Index. The collapse of the country's currency and economic upheaval have fostered discontent since October 2019. The explosion that destroyed large parts of Beirut in August 2020 epitomises the decline of the country's public and political institutions. The increased confrontation between Hezbollah and Israel amid ongoing war in Gaza further obstructs country's security and economy.

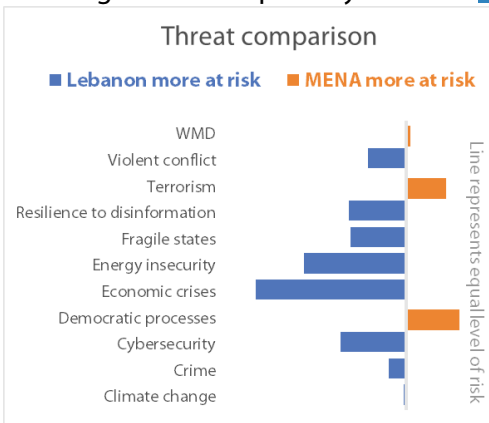
Background and key issues

Lebanon's history of conflict dates back at least to the civil war that erupted in 1975. A small state, Lebanon is at the centre of regional power struggles led today by Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the 2005 Syrian-assisted assassination of then Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, ongoing [Iranian support for Hezbollah](#), and the spill-over of fighting and millions of refugees from the Syrian crisis, not only perpetuate [political and violent conflict](#), but have also led to deep economic crisis. Around 1.5 million Syrian refugees (one quarter of Lebanon's population) have sought refuge in the country since 2011. Iran-backed [Hezbollah](#) has been exchanging fire with Israel almost daily on its southern border, these tensions have increased since Israel's war in Gaza in response to the October 2023 Hamas terrorist attack.



New security and hybrid threats

Lebanon is experiencing an economic crisis not seen since independence in 1943. The situation has deteriorated steadily since October 2019, when nation-wide protests broke out against the deepening economic crisis and perceived corruption, with the currency losing around 95 % of its value. Poverty in Lebanon [tripled](#) over the last decade with more than 80 % of the population now living below the poverty line. The [food security](#) crisis is [worsening](#). In July 2022, the World Bank



[downgraded](#) Lebanon to a lower middle-income country for the first time in 25 years. While in late 2022 and early 2023, the economy reached a temporary bottom point from which to recover – as private consumption grew [thanks](#) to remittances and tourism ([estimated](#) by the Banque du Liban at 30.2% of GDP in 2023) – following the Hamas attack in Israel, Lebanon's economy is [projected](#) to fall back in recession. In addition, the IMF [concluded](#) in May 2024 that the measures undertaken to alleviate the crisis are insufficient. The policy response is also limited: since its parliamentary elections in May 2022, the country remains without a president or a fully empowered government.

EU involvement

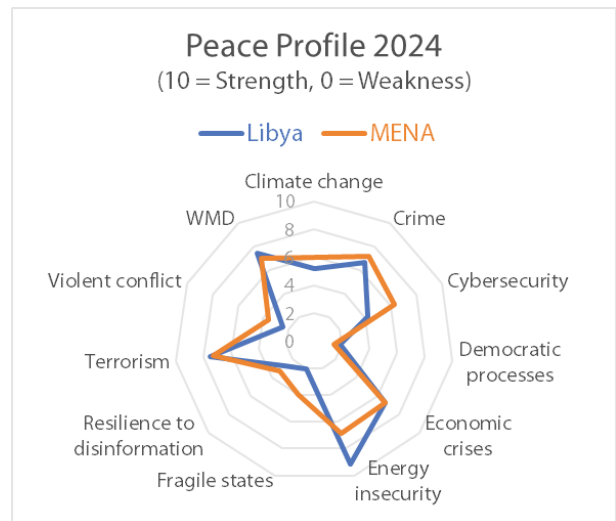
The EU supports Lebanon's efforts to accommodate the highest per capita concentration of refugees in the world. It has allocated more than €3 billion in [assistance](#) to Lebanon since 2011. The EU also provides direct [humanitarian assistance](#) to Syrian refugees, and resilience assistance to both Lebanese citizens and Syrian refugees. In 2023 alone, the EU allocated €67 million in humanitarian aid. Bilateral assistance is allocated under the [European Neighbourhood policy](#). Multi-annual programming for Lebanon under the [Global Europe Instrument](#) focuses on funding to build a sustainable state, able to meet the citizens' needs, reinforcing the economy and ensuring security and stability.

Libya

Libya ranks 101st on the Normandy Index, with a below-average score for the MENA region, except on energy insecurity. Since the 2020 Berlin Conference on Libya and the 2021 approval of the interim government, it is hoped a political process leading to elections could bring Libya closer to reconciliation and democratic transition.

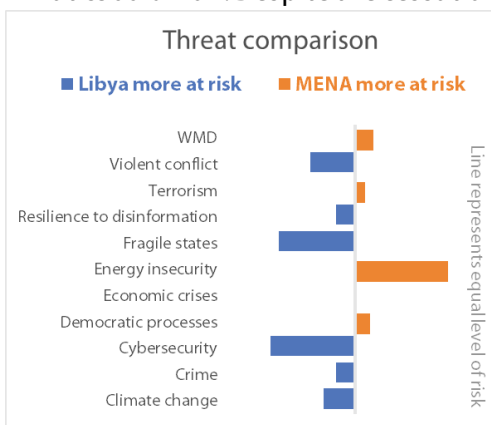
Background and key issues

Libya has been divided into [rival military and political camps](#) since 2014, based respectively in the capital, Tripoli, and in the east. Libya's third civil war in a decade began when Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA) launched an offensive on Tripoli in April 2019. In an effort to remain in power, leader of the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA,) Fayeza Sarraj, turned to Türkiye for military help. The failed [December 2021 elections](#) suspended political processes. Rifts between western factions based in Tripoli and eastern factions based in Tobruk, resurfaced in February 2022, following the [appointment](#) of Fathi Bashagha as the new Prime Minister. Popular anger [culminated](#) on 1 July 2022, when a mob set fire to the parliament building. The African Union [held](#) a peace conference on Libya on 18 April 2023. In 2024, while institutional and political divisions deepen, the political process continues. The High National Elections Commission opened voter registration in June 2024 for [municipal elections](#) in 60 municipalities, to be held later in 2024. Successful municipal elections could pave the way for elections at the national level.



New security and hybrid threats

The UN estimates [economic losses](#) due to the civil war at €400 billion; [rebuilding costs](#) were assessed at €500 billion. Despite the cessation of violence, foreign military personnel and mercenaries remain in Libya, supporting both sides. They were due to leave by the end of January 2021. In April 2021, the UNSC [adopted](#) resolution 2570 (2021), urging member states to withdraw 'all foreign forces and mercenaries from Libya without delay'. In July 2022, the National Oil Corporation (NOC) [suspended](#) services at several oil ports. Threats of terrorism, human trafficking and illegal migration remain high. On 16 March 2023, The Libyan National Army discovered two and a half tonnes of [uranium](#) ore near the border with Chad, which the International Atomic Energy Agency had reported missing. [Foreign actors](#), in particular backed by Russia and Türkiye, continued to be present in the country in 2024.



EU involvement

The EU is committed to the [Berlin Process](#) under the auspices of the UN. Following the 2020 Berlin Conference on Libya, the EU launched a new military mission, [Operation Iirini](#), with the goal of implementing the UNSC-imposed arms embargo. The EU Integrated Border Assistance Mission in Libya ([EUBAM Libya](#)) supports the Libyan authorities. Libya has received support under the Neighbourhood Policy Instrument and the EU [Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) (EUTF Africa). A revised strategy for the Southern Neighbourhood was adopted on 9 February 2021. In May 2024, Tripoli based Libyan Prime Minister Abd Alhamid Aldabaiba [met](#) Commission President von der Leyen in Brussels, discussing mainly security, migration and energy policy.

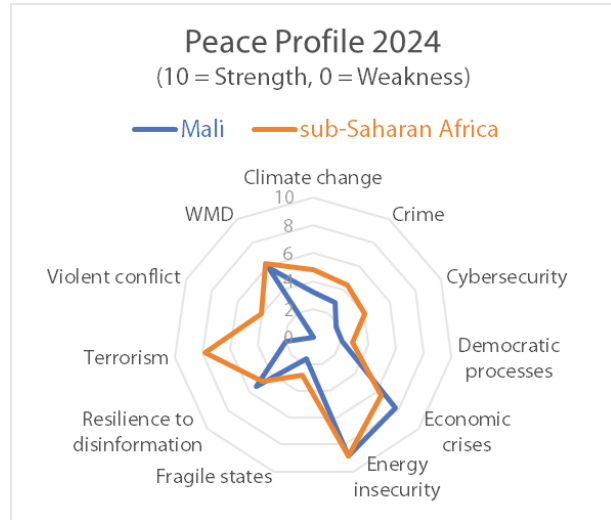
Mali

Mali ranks 129th on the Normandy Index. The country, led by a military junta since 2021, faces continued threats from violent jihadist groups, as well as climate change-related challenges, including increased resource scarcity.

Background and key issues

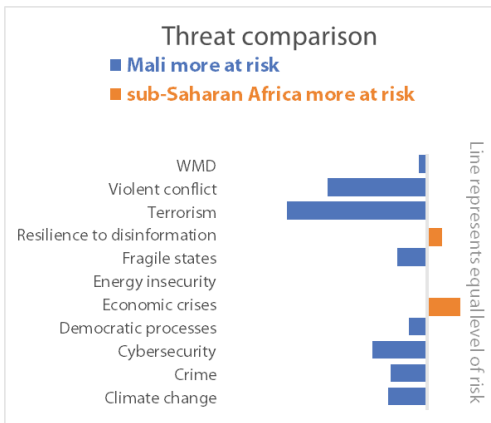
Mali scores significantly below the sub-Saharan average on violent conflict and terrorism, due to [jihadist attacks](#). A combination of [climate change](#) and resource-scarcity is leading to a severe humanitarian crisis. Armed groups are spreading from [northern Mali](#) into the central region around Bamako and to neighbouring countries.

Mali experienced two coups in 2020 and [2021](#). In May 2022, Mali's transitional authorities [decided](#) to terminate the defence cooperation treaty with France, as well as the agreement governing Canadian and European partner forces involved in the Takuba Task Force (which [ceased](#) operations on 1 July 2022). In June 2023, Mali's government demanded that the Multidimensional Integrated UN Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) leave the country; [MINUSMA withdrawal](#) was completed in December 2023. At the same time, Mali's government strengthened its links with [Russia](#) and Russian private military companies deployed to Mali to train local forces. Colonel Assimi Goïta's military junta [postponed](#) the [presidential election](#) several times for 'technical reasons', without communicating new dates.



New security and hybrid threats

[Disinformation campaigns](#), mainly Russia-led, are worsening instability in Mali. Together, the unravelling of the G5 Sahel, withdrawal of [French](#) military operations and EU [Takuba](#) and [Canadian](#) forces, repudiation of [US](#) military bases in Niger, termination of the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and the [scaling down](#) of EU missions in the Sahel, have led to [increased attacks](#) by violent extremist groups. Together with Burkina Faso and Niger, on 28 January 2024, Mali [announced](#) its withdrawal from ECOWAS. Mali had earlier withdrawn from the [G5 Sahel](#), a regional, intergovernmental organisation between Sahel countries, to form the Alliance of the Sahel States (AES). Withdrawal from ECOWAS raises additional economic and security issues, as Mali will no longer enjoy ECOWAS trade, free movement and peace and security mechanisms.



EU involvement

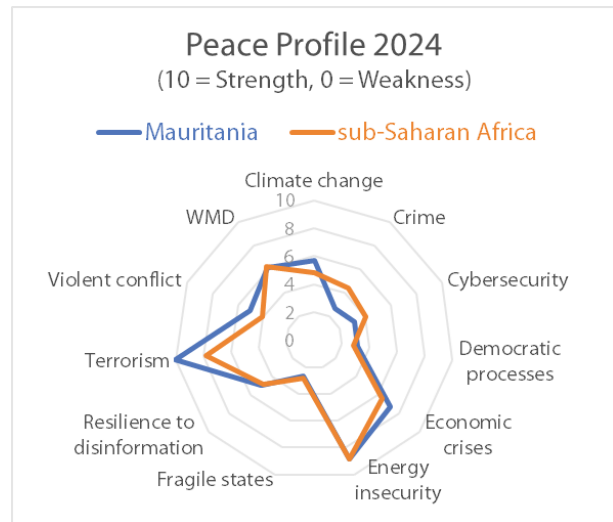
The EU adopted a [new strategy for the Sahel](#) in April 2021, with the aim of strengthening the political dimension and the emphasis on sustainable development in the EU's partnership with the G5 Sahel countries. Even after the 2021 coup, the [European Peace Facility](#) financed the Malian armed forces to support their combat against insurgent groups. Mali hosted two EU CSDP missions: [EUCAP Sahel Mali](#), a capacity-building mission; and [EUTM Mali](#), a training mission for the G5 Sahel armed forces. However, EUTM Mali suspended its operational action for the country in April 2022 and the Council [decided](#) not to renew its mandate after 18 May 2024.

Mauritania

Mauritania ranks 87th on the Normandy Index. It is considered more at risk on crime and state fragility, while the country is at low risk in terms of terrorism.

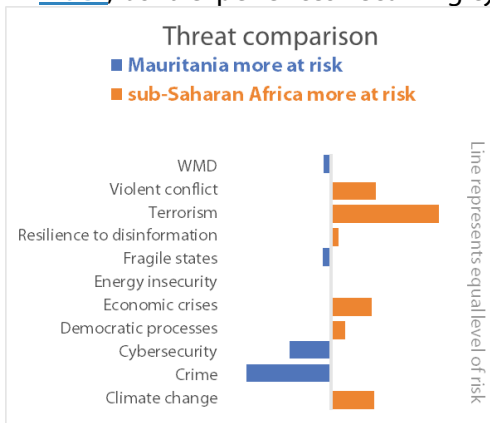
Background and key issues

Mauritania is one of the poorest countries in the world. In recent decades, its political life has been marked by several [military coups](#), the most recent led by General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz in 2008, followed by his election in 2009. In June 2019, Mauritania [saw](#) the first peaceful transfer of power since independence in 1960, with the election of the ruling party candidate and former defence minister, Mohamed Ould Ghazouani. Mauritania ranks 37th on the [2023 Fragile States Index](#) and 130th on the [2022 Corruption Perception Index](#). In February 2020, the national parliament formed a committee of enquiry to investigate [alleged corruption cases](#) during the former president's mandate. Despite increasing numbers of attacks in the Sahel, Mauritania has proved to be remarkably [resilient](#) against jihadism.



New security and hybrid threats

Parliamentary elections were [held](#) in Mauritania on 13 and 27 May 2023, alongside regional and local elections. The ruling El Insaf (Equity Party) secured a majority in the National Assembly. Failure to eradicate [slavery](#), despite its abolition in 1981, explains the country's particularly low score on state legitimacy. Mauritania faces the second highest risk of drought according to the [Global Risk Index](#), as it experiences recurring cycles of drought that exacerbate resource scarcity and food insecurity. The country passed its first data privacy laws in 2017, but is still in the early stages of addressing cybersecurity, ranking 145th on the [Global Cybersecurity Index](#). Mauritania rose from 86th position in 2023 to 33rd on the 2024 [World Press Freedom Index](#). In 2020, President Ghazouani appointed a national commission for press reform, in view of consolidating [press freedom](#). Population displacement, exacerbated by the crisis in neighbouring Mali, extreme weather, and food and nutrition crises [caused](#) a need for humanitarian assistance for over 844 000 people in 2023. Over 30% of the population is either near or in multidimensional poverty.



EU involvement

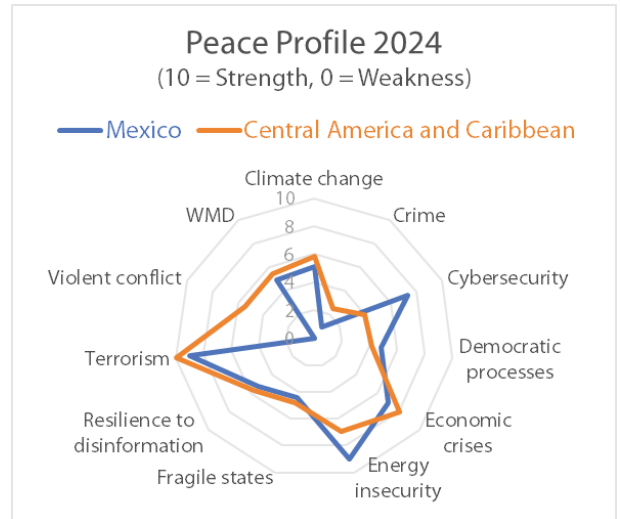
The EU adopted a [new strategy for the Sahel](#) in 2021. Beyond military engagement, this strengthens the political dimension and the emphasis on sustainable development in the EU's partnership with the G5 Sahel countries. Mauritania benefits from a duty-free, quota-free access to the EU market for ['Everything but Arms'](#). The [European Development Fund](#) provided up to €160 million during 2014-2020, for food security and sustainable agriculture; the rule of law; and health system improvement in Mauritania. The EU [Emergency Trust Fund for Africa](#) supports conflict prevention projects, [contributing](#) €79 million since 2017. Since 2007, the EU has provided €154 million for humanitarian projects. The EU also supports the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) in the country. Commission President von der Leyen visited Mauritania in February 2024. On 7 March 2024, the Commission [announced](#) a migration partnership backed by €210 million in aid, and dialogue to strengthen cooperation in migration management, border security and support to host communities.

Mexico

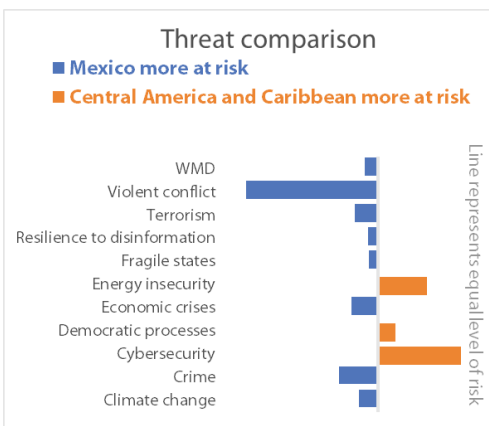
Mexico ranks 96th on the Normandy Index. General and presidential elections in June 2024 returned Claudia Sheinbaum as the first female president in the country's 200-year history. Mexico continues to suffer high levels of violent conflict and homicide and remains one of the world's most dangerous and deadly countries for journalists and human rights defenders.

Background and key issues

Mexico was [ranked](#) the deadliest place in the world to be an environmental activist in 2022, with 54 activists killed the previous year. The high homicide levels largely [mirror](#) trends in organised crime-related violence, as criminal groups battle for control of illicit smuggling routes into the US. Between 25 % and 50 % of total homicides reported by the Mexican government were likely linked to [organised crime](#). Although former president López Obrador's security policy approach ('hugs, not bullets') contributed to a progressive reduction in security force clashes with criminal groups from 2018, violence both between criminal groups and between state forces and criminal groups increased since 2023. According to the [Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights](#), three major conflicts in Mexico (involving drug cartels) have reached the extent to which they are assessed a non-international armed conflict (NIAC).



New security and hybrid threats



According to [Europol](#), seizures of methamphetamine and cocaine linked to Mexican criminal actors have emerged as a prominent feature of the EU illicit drug landscape. Mexican criminal actors and EU-based criminal networks are cooperating on trafficking these drugs from Latin America to the EU. The UNODC [2023 Global Report on Cocaine](#) notes the global supply of cocaine is at record levels. Cocaine production recently doubled from 2014 to 2020. Experts assume that the cocaine supply chain will catch up with new record levels of coca cultivation in 2024, leading to rising profits for global organised crime. Also, between 2019 and 2022, fentanyl seizures at the Mexico-US border rose by 300 %.

EU involvement

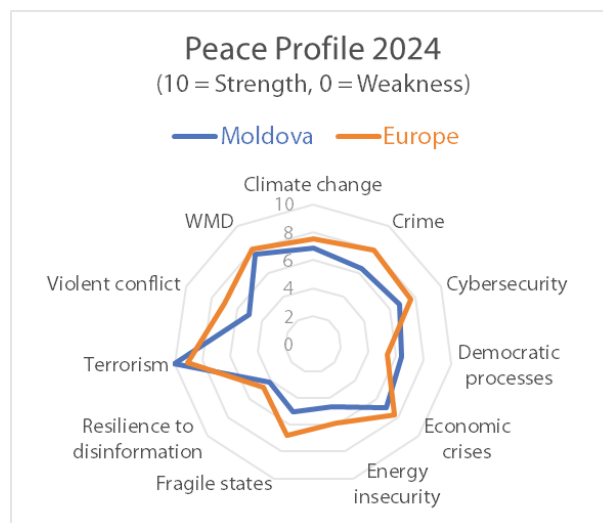
The EU has a long-standing comprehensive partnership with Mexico, through the EU-Mexico Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement, signed in 1997 and which entered into force on 1 October 2000. This 'Global Agreement' includes a free trade agreement, currently being [updated](#) (an agreement 'in principle' has been reached). It was the first EU agreement to create a free trade area and the first partnership agreement with a country in Latin America. In 2008, the EU agreed a [strategic partnership](#) with Mexico that introduced new high-level dialogue issues, such as on security, law enforcement and human rights. The EU is stepping up cooperation with Mexico on combating organised crime. [Negotiations](#) concluding a working arrangement between Mexican authorities and Europol resulted in an agreement that entered into force in [July 2020](#). Mexico has participated in a total of 25 IcSP projects, with funding totalling more than €66 million. The 29th meeting of the Joint Parliamentary EU-Mexico Committee took place on 27 and 28 April 2023 in Brussels. Mexico has condemned Russian aggression and supports Ukraine's sovereignty at the UN Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.

Moldova

Moldova ranks 41st on the Normandy Index and performs well on the democratic processes indicator. However, Russia's war on Ukraine and its hybrid actions against Moldova have negative impact on the country. To counter this, Moldova is progressing on its path to European integration and focused on increasing its energy security.

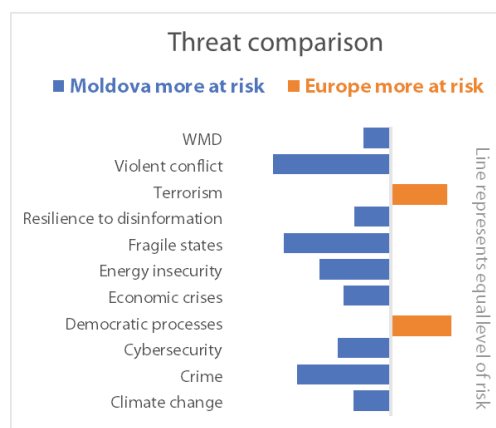
Background and key issues

Presidential elections, together with a referendum on a constitutional amendment supporting Moldova's EU membership, will take place on [20 October 2024](#). Incumbent President, pro-European [Maia Sandu](#) is expected to stand for a second term. Her Party of Action and Solidarity (PAS) received 52.8% of the vote in the July 2021 [parliamentary elections](#) and won a 63-seat majority in the 101-seat parliament. Consequently, all Moldovan branches of government (including the president, the government and the parliament) are currently aligned and support a shared, ambitious reform agenda, with European integration the main objective. Moldova is part of a [frozen conflict](#) over the Russian-backed breakaway region of [Transnistria](#). Moldova also welcomed the highest number of Ukrainian [refugees](#) per capita of any country.



New security and hybrid threats

While not thought to be in imminent military [danger](#), Moldova remains under constant Russian hybrid attack. The number of incidents is constantly [increasing](#), as the election date in Moldova [approaches](#). In March 2023, a reportedly Russian intelligence [document](#) revealing a 10-year plan to take control of Moldova was made [public](#). Russia has also used its gas deliveries to Moldova to [blackmail](#) the country. To [reduce](#) these dependencies, Moldova started [importing](#) natural gas through reverse flow from the [Slovak-Ukraine](#) border in November 2022, and as of December 2022, through the [Trans-Balkan](#) corridor. Moldova increased its electricity independence when Moldova's (and Ukraine's) electricity grids were [synchronised](#) with the continental European grid on 16 March 2022.



EU involvement

Moldova and EU signed an [Association Agreement](#) and a [DCFTA](#) in 2014. Moreover, Moldova and EU signed [Security and Defence Partnership](#) on 21 May 2024. Following Moldova's 4 January 2022 and [24 January 2023](#) requests, the Commission adopted proposals to provide up to €295 million in new macro-financial assistance (MFA) to the country. Overall support for Moldova from the EU and European financial institutions is [estimated](#) at €2.1 billion in loans and grants since 2021. On 3 March 2022, President Sandu [signed](#) Moldova's formal application for EU membership, a decision hastened by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In June 2022, EU leaders [granted](#) the candidate country status for EU accession and agreed to [open](#) accession negotiations in December 2023. Accession [negotiations](#) began on 25 June 2024, with the first intergovernmental conference. The EU also provides Moldova with technical, border management and military support. On 24 April 2023, the EU set up the EU Partnership Mission in Moldova ([EUPM Moldova](#)) under CSDP. This is the second mission to Moldova, as the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine ([EUBAM](#)) was launched in 2005. Moreover, the [European Peace Facility](#) (EPF) provided [€128 million](#) for Moldovan army modernisation.

Mongolia

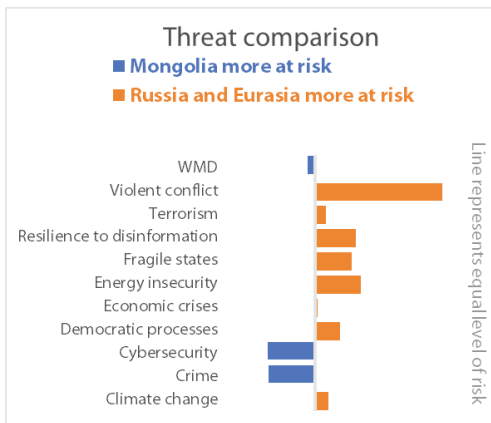
Mongolia ranks 27th on the Normandy Index, performing well on violent conflict, terrorism threat and energy insecurity indicators. The country performs comparatively poorly on cybersecurity and crime.

Background and key issues

Mongolia ranks 109th on the [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#), down from 88th in [2023](#), as investigative journalism has recently faced [serious challenges](#) in the country. The December 2022 [anti-corruption protests](#) revealed large public interest in good governance and in combating endemic corruption and fed into a new [anti-corruption strategy](#). Mongolia ranked 121st of 180 countries on the 2023 [Transparency International Index](#). Given Mongolia's wealth in natural resources including coal, gold, copper, zinc, fluorspar, iron ore, tungsten, oil and gas, one of the driving forces of the country's economic development is the mining and extraction sector. Mongolia's large dependence on mining exports, high levels of external debt and exposure to external shocks in the form of global commodity price fluctuations create considerable risk of [macroeconomic vulnerabilities](#). In 2021, the mining sector represented [21%](#) of Mongolia's GDP and minerals accounted for 81% of exports.

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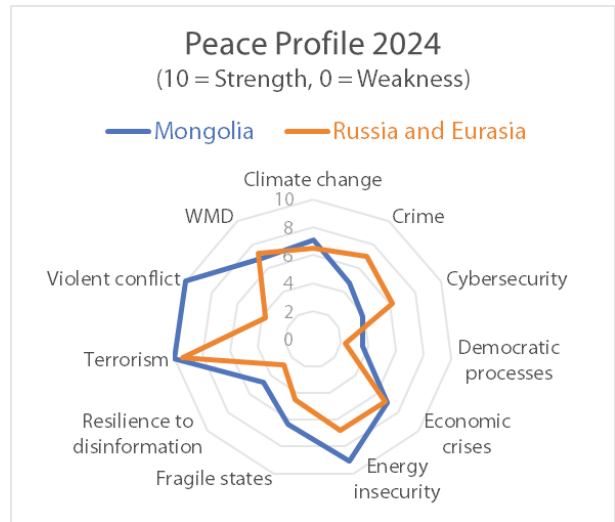
New security and hybrid threats



Mongolia is one of the countries [most affected](#) by climate change, as observed temperatures have increased by 2.1°C over the past 70 years, a trend [exacerbated](#) by overgrazing and over-extraction. According to the UN, changes have also been observed in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Mongolia performs poorly on criminality. It ranks 148th of 193 countries on the 2023 [Organised Crime Index](#). In recent years, Mongolia [experienced](#) a surge in cyberattacks carried out by Chinese and Russian hackers. In 2023, Mongolia complemented its 2021 legal cybersecurity [framework](#) by issuing a [national cybersecurity strategy](#).

EU involvement

[Diplomatic relations](#) between the EU and Mongolia were established in 1989 and are now based on the EU-Mongolia [Partnership and Cooperation Agreement](#) (PCA), which entered into force in 2017, the same year the Delegation of the EU to Mongolia [moved](#) to Ulaanbaatar. The EU continued to [focus](#) on support for vulnerable groups and the empowerment of civil society. The fight against child labour and other forms of exploitation of children continued to figure prominently among the EU's priorities. Other priorities included: gender equality; non-discrimination; the rule of law; and building resilient, inclusive and democratic societies; as well as the promotion of human rights and democracy. In 2020, the EU launched its first [budget support programme](#) with UN development programme (UNDP) technical support, to boost employment and improve transparency in public finances. The Commission's 2021-2027 [multi-annual indicative programme](#) for Mongolia prioritises green sustainable development and democratic and economic development. On 26 July 2023, the EU and Mongolia held their annual [Joint Committee meeting](#) under the EU-Mongolia PCA. Mongolia and the EU [agreed](#) to foster bilateral cooperation on connectivity, digitalisation and the green transition, with the support of the EU's [Global Gateway](#) and Team Europe initiatives.



Morocco

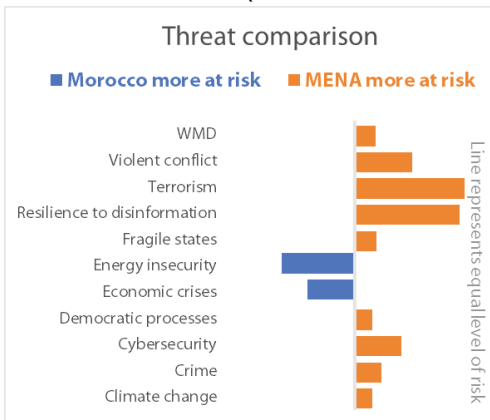
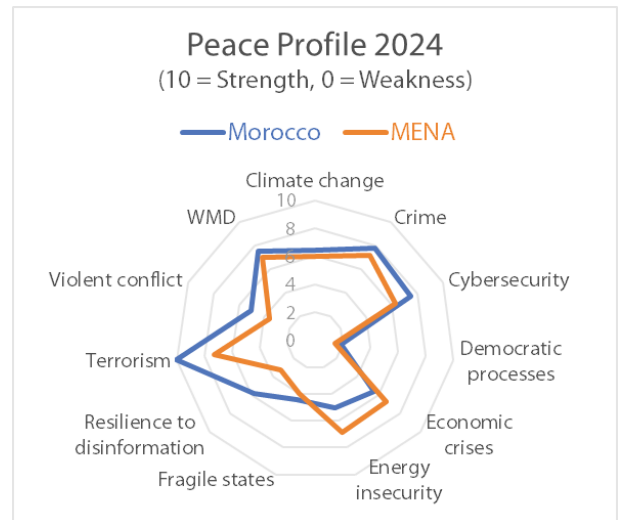
Morocco ranks 56th on the Normandy Index, with an above-average score for the MENA region on terrorism, crime, cybersecurity, WMD and climate-change indicators. While Morocco is a relatively stable country, irregular migration remains a weakness, as are its energy insecurity and democratic processes.

Background and key issues

The Moroccan government announced a US\$12.8 billion [Economic Relaunch Pact](#) on 6 August 2020. However, austerity measures as part of the 2021 Finance Bill increased social discontent and protests. On 1 July 2022, protests were organised in several cities following the deaths of at least 23 migrants at the border with the Spanish enclave of Melilla on 24 June 2022. Morocco's Human Rights Association [contested](#) the official death toll, reporting instead that 27 migrants had died, while the Spanish non-governmental organisation Walking Borders reports 37 fatalities.

New security and hybrid threats

Morocco has invigorated its economy in the past 15 years. However, due to the pandemic Morocco [slipped](#) into its first recession since 1995 in 2020. A GDP fall of 6.3 % was due to the impact of drought on agricultural revenue. The economy grew by 7.9 % in 2021 and 1.1 % in 2022 (African Development Bank [data](#)). In 2021, growth was driven by an exceptional cereal crop, solid exports and remittances (the latter estimated at €3.3 billion annually). The slowdown was accentuated in



2022 by falling agricultural output (-17.3 % from 2021), due to the worst drought of the past 40 years. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) estimates GDP growth will recover to 3.5 % in 2023 and 3.7 % in 2024, as global economic tensions ease and foreign demand for goods and services rebounds. [Morocco](#) is a net energy importer: energy imports, including from [Algeria](#) with which relations were disrupted in 2021, account for over 90 % of its total energy consumption. A focus on renewables and clean energy is currently a key government objective to ensure energy resilience.

EU involvement

EU-Morocco relations are based on the [Association Agreement](#), which created a free trade area between the EU and Morocco in 2000. The Association Council, which brings together the EU and Moroccan ministers, frames the EU-Morocco relationship, including the political dialogue and cooperation priorities. The 2019 [Joint Declaration](#) gave new impetus to the strategic, multidimensional and privileged EU-Morocco relationship. The EU [allocated](#) more than €500 million in 2021-2022 for investment in higher education (€46 million), inclusive economies (€191 million), energy transition (€50 million) and sustainable agriculture (€115 million). The Commission provided €177 million in budget-support assistance for Morocco to support the 2024-2028 integrated programme for the reconstruction and comprehensive upgrade of the disaster areas hit in the September 2023 earthquake. The EIB is lending €1 billion over five years (guaranteed by the EU) to Morocco's post-earthquake reconstruction programme. In 2022, the EU and Morocco signed a Green Partnership to work on climate and energy, the environment (marine and maritime), and the green economy. The Council [granted](#) the Commission a negotiating mandate to conclude a re-admission agreement with Morocco in 2000, but work is still ongoing. On 8 July 2022, the European Commission vowed to step up its work with Morocco to fight irregular migration.

Mozambique

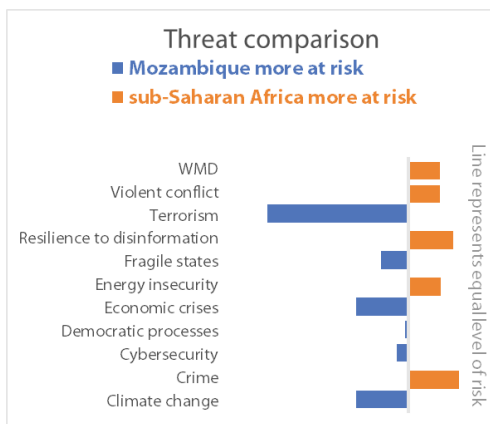
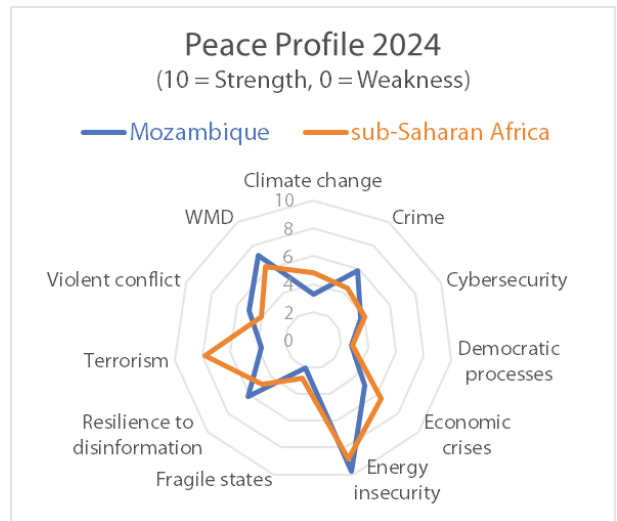
Mozambique ranks 106th on the Normandy Index. Over the last decade, its overall level of fragility has deteriorated, partly due to the jihadist network threat in the Cabo Delgado province, which has nevertheless been less acute in 2023. The country faces other serious threats from lack of political participation and inclusion, climate change and cyber insecurity.

Background and key issues

The independence movement against the Portuguese began in the 1960s, with the establishment of the Liberation Front of Mozambique (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*, or Frelimo) in 1962. Following independence in 1975, the country was ravaged by a guerrilla war between 1977 and 1992, against the one-party system established by Frelimo. A 1992 [peace agreement](#) temporarily ended this conflict, launching a political and economic opportunity. Frelimo has governed the country, without a break, since independence. The opposition is politically and economically marginalised. The country is one of the poorest in the world, with the [World Bank](#) assessing an annual per capita GDP of US\$608 in 2023.

New security and hybrid threats

Islamist [insurgency](#) has destabilised the Northern province of Cabo Delgado since 2017. The army was ineffective in fighting back, and Islamists temporarily took control of regional port towns in 2020-2021, forcing foreign [companies](#) to put a huge offshore gas extraction project on hold. Since July 2021, Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states' troops and (seemingly more decisive), 2 500 [Rwandan troops](#), deployed to Cabo Delgado have helped [stabilise](#) the situation. The 2024 [Global Terrorism Index](#) ranks the country ranks 15th (slight progress from 12th in 2023, however the country remains highly impacted). The country is exposed to extreme climate events (notably droughts), which have caused [devastation](#), exacerbating [food insecurity](#) in recent years. Energy insecurity is also deteriorating. The country has not condemned Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in UNGA [resolutions](#). President Felipe Nyusi took part in the [Russia-Africa Summit](#) in July 2023.



EU involvement

Mozambique ratified the [EU-SADC economic partnership agreement](#) in 2017, enjoying additional safeguards. In November 2020, the EU [restored](#) its budget support to the country to help it address COVID-19, after a four-year suspension in response to massive corruption. In 2021, the EU and Mozambique agreed [common objectives](#) for their development cooperation under the Global Europe Instrument for the next seven years (MIP). The EU established a military training mission in Mozambique ([EUTM Mozambique](#)), providing training for the army on protecting the civilian population and restoring security in Cabo Delgado. In May 2024, the Council [decided](#) to gradually transform it into an assistance mission, combining advice, mentoring and specialised training for the Rapid Reaction Force. Through the [European Peace Facility](#) (EPF), the EU has committed equipment and training worth €124 million: €4 million in July 2021 (first mobilisation of the EPF since its creation), [€40 million](#) in November 2021 and [€45 million](#) in April 2022 for the army, via the EUTM; [€15 million](#) for the SADC mission (SAMIM) in September 2022; and [€20 million](#) in December 2022 for the Rwandan Defence Force in Mozambique.

Myanmar

Myanmar ranks 124th on the Normandy Index, marked by a steep fall in rank since the February 2021 military coup, which brought violence and chaos. The country has long been plagued by poverty, ethnic conflict and human rights abuses. Myanmar also performs badly on climate change and disinformation.

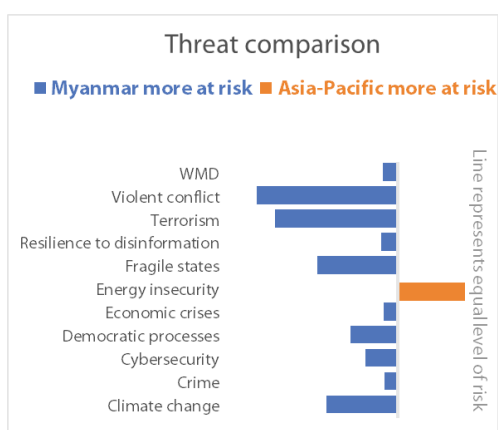
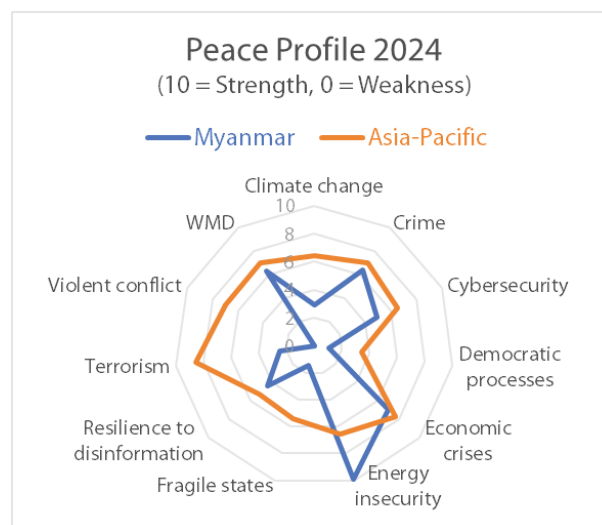
Background and key issues

Tensions between the Bamar majority and over 135 ethnic groups have caused decades of instability in Myanmar. Conflict between ethnic armed groups and government forces have cost thousands of lives and [displaced](#) hundreds of thousands. Some 50 years of military rule have seen horrific human rights abuses and grinding poverty. Constitutional reforms that began in 2008, and the election of a civilian government in 2015, looked like positive developments. Democratic reform also brought economic development, with the [World Bank](#) noting a 10-fold increase in GDP per capita between 2000 and 2020, from around €146 to €1 450. In 2016-2017, the military killed thousands of people from the persecuted [Rohingya minority](#), who live in the northern zones of Rakhine State, resulting in a mass exodus of refugees. [Genocide charges](#) were brought against Myanmar at the ICJ (see [The Gambia v Myanmar](#), filed in November 2019).

New security and hybrid threats

The February 2021 military coup ended five years of uneasy co-existence between the civilian government and the powerful armed forces. Civilian leaders, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate [Aung San Suu Kyi](#), were imprisoned or placed under house arrest, and the country descended into chaos following violently repressed protests against military rule. In December 2022,

[Aung San Suu Kyi](#) was [sentenced](#) by a military court to a further seven years in prison, bringing her total sentence to 33 years. Unsurprisingly, Myanmar counts among the most fragile states on the planet. Political instability already hampered economic growth even before the coronavirus pandemic, and Myanmar remains one of the poorest countries in Asia. Strikes led by the anti-junta Civil Disobedience Movement have brought entire sectors of the economy to a halt, disrupting food and energy supplies. The outlook for the country remains extremely uncertain. In 2008, [Cyclone Nargis](#) hit the country, killing nearly 100 000 people and causing damage that affected millions, a reminder of the threat posed by climate change.



EU involvement

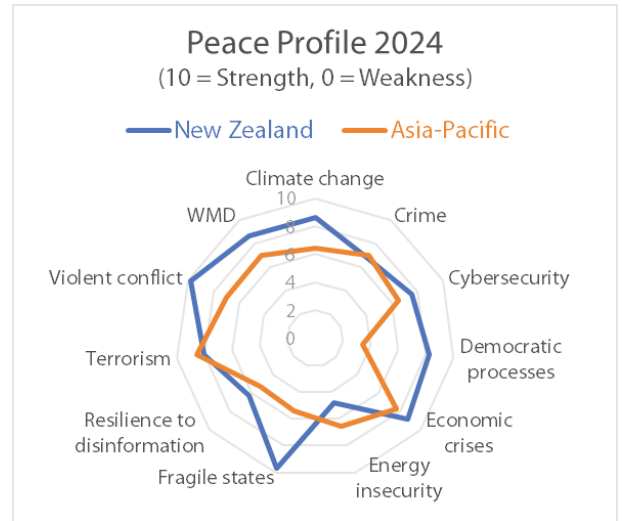
The EU adopted economic sanctions and an arms embargo against Myanmar in the 1990s. Following democratic reform, the economic sanctions were lifted in 2013, although the arms embargo remained in place. The EU re-imposed some sanctions against military officers in 2018, following the Rohingya massacres, and [broadened](#) sanctions in 2022. Some development projects have also been suspended. The European Parliament has [repeatedly](#) adopted resolutions condemning the military coup and the frequent human rights' violations, demanding the reinstatement of the civilian government and additional sanctions. A European Parliament Vice-President was co-chair of the International Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on the coup, which published a report on the failed international response to the Myanmar coup' in November 2022.

New Zealand

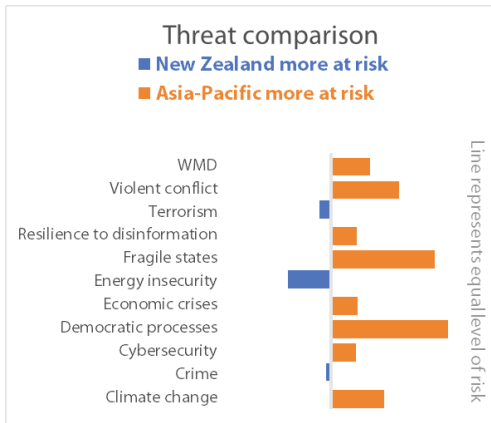
New Zealand ranks 5th on the Normandy Index. It performs better than the Asia-Pacific average on most indicators apart from energy security and crime, and scores notably well on the management of economic crises and democratic processes.

Background and key issues

New Zealand has a long-standing democratic tradition in the form of a parliamentary system, enhanced by strong levels of education and high per capita GDP, which the [World Bank](#) puts at US\$48 528 in 2023. On the latest [Human Development Index](#), it ranked 16th out of the 191 countries measured, immediately following the UK. The Economist Intelligence Unit's 2022 [Democracy Index](#) ranks New Zealand second overall, and first equal with Norway on electoral process, pluralism and political participation. In addition, it is the third most stable country according to the Normandy Index, as measured by the fragile states' indicator. This is due to strong perception of state legitimacy, effective public services and low levels of external intervention. New Zealand performs well on most indicators of traditional conflict, and ranks 50th on the 2024 [Global Terrorism Index](#) (48th in 2023).



New security and hybrid threats



Thanks to its resilient democratic institutions, high standard of living and public services, and extreme remoteness from the world's most densely populated regions, New Zealand has long been relatively insulated from traditional security and hybrid threats. New Zealand society enjoys a high level of press freedom, ranked 19th on the 2024 [Press Freedom Index](#). However, a high level of [trade dependency](#) on China, and concerns that growing US-China strategic [rivalry](#) could spill over into the South Pacific, have made the strategic environment less benign.

EU involvement

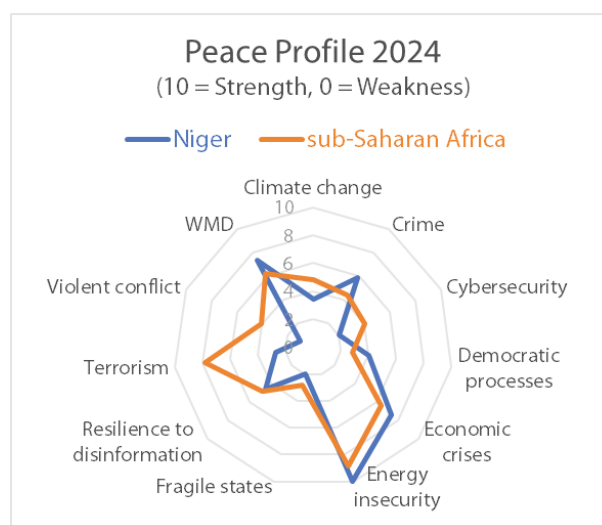
The EU's bilateral political relationship with New Zealand is based on the 2016 [Partnership for Relations and Cooperation](#) (PARC). The agreement provides a framework for regular political dialogue, including consultations at ministerial, senior official and parliamentary levels. In 2018, the EU launched negotiations with New Zealand on a bilateral [free trade agreement](#) (FTA). On 30 June 2022, the EU and New Zealand [concluded](#) negotiations on an FTA that includes climate and labour commitments with sanctions available in case of non-performance. The FTA entered into force on 1 May 2024. The EU is New Zealand's third largest [trading partner](#) after China and Australia, and the second largest source of FDI for New Zealand. Within the EU, important bilateral trade partners for New Zealand include Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands. New Zealand has [participated](#) in the EU's anti-piracy mission off the Horn of Africa, [EUNAVFOR Atalanta](#), as well as its [EUPOL](#) police mission in Afghanistan, and is an important EU development aid partner in the South Pacific.

Niger

Niger ranks 116th on the Normandy Index. Violent jihadist groups proliferate amid regional instability, causing a surge in refugees and internally displaced people. This compounds the already dire effects of climate change on access to resources, a further trigger for conflict. The 2023 coup put an end to Western partners' strategy to invest in Niger as the main security hub in the region.

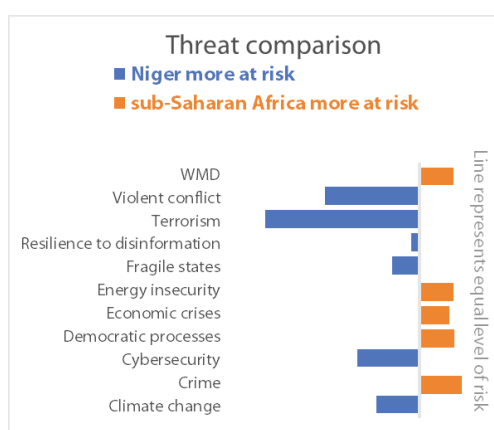
Background and key issues

Niger ranks 189th of 193 countries on the [UN Human Development Index](#) and is the 13th most vulnerable country to climate change on the [ND-GAIN index](#). Its riches (5 % of the world's [uranium](#) resources) still overwhelmingly benefit [foreign mining interests](#). Climate change and poorly adapted [agricultural practices](#), combined with rapid population growth, contribute to scarcity. Food insecurity, aggravated by the pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine, as well as population displacement across the country, exacerbate tensions between communities and grievances against the government. [Violent extremist groups](#) (including Boko Haram, the Islamic State in the Sahel, ISIL/Da'esh West Africa, and Al-Qaeda) exploit these tensions, especially in the border areas with Chad and Nigeria (Lake Chad) and with Mali and Burkina Faso (Liptako-Gourma). While Niger had a relatively peaceful transition in 2021, a [coup](#) by elements of the presidential guard removed President Mohamed Bazoum from office on 26 July 2023.



New security and hybrid threats

Niger is particularly targeted by [disinformation campaigns](#), aggravating instability. On 28 January 2024, together with Burkina Faso and Mali, Niger [announced](#) its withdrawal from ECOWAS; they had previously withdrawn from the [G5 Sahel](#) – a regional, intergovernmental



organisation between Sahel countries – to form the Alliance of the Sahel States (AES). In addition, Niger repudiated deals on [French](#) and [US](#) military bases and EU CSDP missions on its soil. This has led to [rising attacks](#) by violent extremist groups, despite increased military cooperation with [Russia](#). The withdrawal from ECOWAS raises additional economic and security issues, as Niger will no longer enjoy ECOWAS trade, free movement and peace and security mechanisms. According to the Africa Center for Strategic Studies, the Niger coup 'has resulted in a [deterioration](#) in security, economic wellbeing, and agency for Nigerien citizens'.

EU involvement

Niger is the Sahel's most populous country and was a key partner for the EU, which adopted a [new strategy for the Sahel](#) in April 2021. Before the 2023 coup, the EU supported the Nigerien force with a civilian capacity-building mission [EUCAP Sahel Niger](#) and the [EU Military Partnership Mission in Niger](#) in December 2022 to provide expert advice and training to the Nigerien armed forces. Several [European Peace Facility](#) measures help finance the provision of (lethal) military equipment and support activities. However, the revocation of EUMPM and EUCAP Sahel Niger in December 2023 indicates a decline in EU-Sahel cooperation. Similarly, Niger had strengthened its policy to combat irregular migration with EU support, as part of the EU's 2016 [new partnership with third countries](#), but the new leadership repealed a key anti-trafficking law in November 2023.

Nigeria

Nigeria ranks 115th on the Normandy Index. It is considered more at risk than the sub-Saharan African average and is particularly vulnerable to terrorism. Ethnic tensions date back to colonial times. While the 1967-1970 civil war was primarily about the equitable distribution of oil revenues between ethnic groups. Recent conflict has assumed more sectarian overtones.

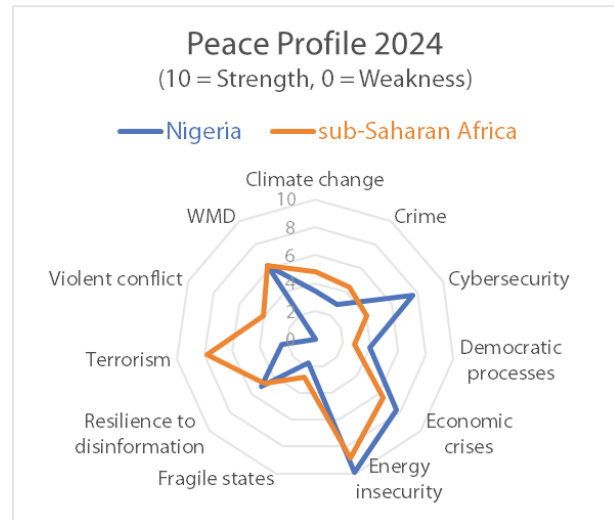
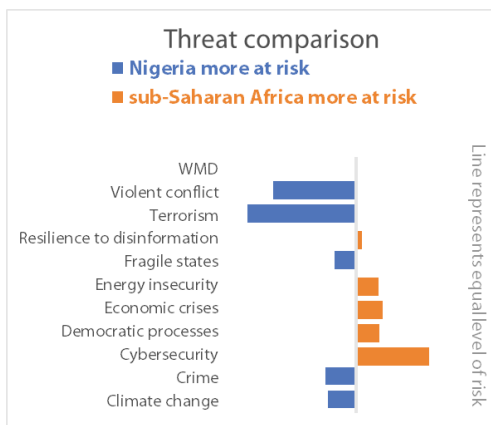
Background and key issues

Nigeria ranked 8th on the [2024](#) and [2023](#) Global Terrorism Indexes (and 5th in 2022). The country experienced a halving of terrorism deaths in 2021, due to the fight against Boko Haram and the death of its leader Abubakar Shekau. The ISIL/Da'esh in West Africa Province (ISWA) overtook Boko Haram as the deadliest terror group in Nigeria in 2021. The world 9th deadliest terrorist attack in 2023 took place near Lake Chad in Borno state on [19 August](#). In recent years, mass abductions under a release-against-ransom payment scheme became a criminal gang speciality. On [7 March 2024](#), gunmen abducted 287 students from a school in Kuriga; the army rescued 137 hostages on 24 March.

Nigeria ranks 15th on the [2023 Fragile States Index](#), and 8th on the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#) (same as in 2023), ranking in the top-10 of highly impacted countries. On 1 March 2023, [Bola Tinubu](#), of the ruling party, won the [February 2023](#) presidential elections. However, Nigeria, the leading [West-African force](#), did not sign the [Samoa Agreement](#), the partnership agreement signed in November 2023 between the EU, its Member States and Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) member countries.

New security and hybrid threats

Despite being Africa's biggest economy by national GDP, Nigeria's economic situation is fragile, owing to its over-reliance on oil. After experiencing its deepest recession since the 1980s in 2020, due to COVID-19, Nigeria's [economy](#) has returned to moderate growth. The country's very young population is a largely untapped economic potential. However, coupled with climate change and land degradation – a severe threat particularly in the north – demographic growth can also be a [driver](#) of severe social instability. Nigeria ranks 112th of 180 countries on the [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#), rising 11 places compared to 2023. The 2023 elections saw strict controls, attacks on journalists and arbitrary arrests. Organised [oil crime](#) in the Niger Delta – covering [theft](#), illegal refining and sale – affects up to 20 % of Nigeria's oil output and perpetuates corruption.



EU involvement

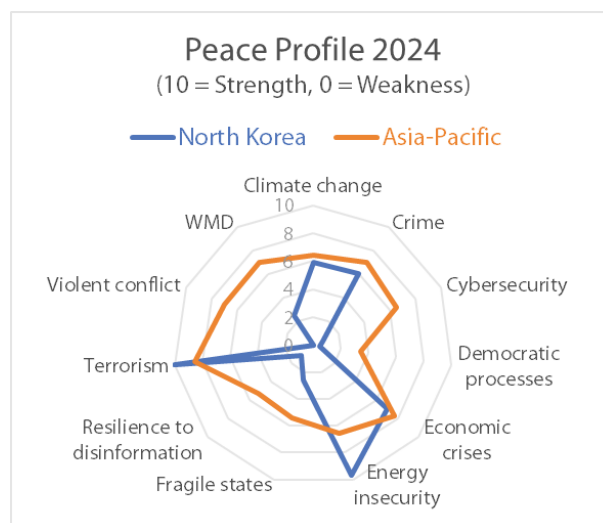
The EU continues to [fund](#) an initiative grouping several Lake Chad countries – the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) – in combating Boko Haram. In 2021, Nigeria and the EU agreed [new shared objectives](#) for development cooperation under the Global Europe Instrument for the next seven years. The EU negotiated a regional [economic partnership agreement](#) with Nigeria and other West-African countries, but Nigeria remains reluctant to implement it. In 2022, the [Team Europe](#) initiative, 'Nigeria Green Economy' project committed €1.3 billion to the energy sector. The EU deployed an election observation mission for the 2023 presidential elections.

North Korea

North Korea ranks 128th on the Normandy Index, clearly below the Asia-Pacific average. Since 1948, talks on reunifying the Korean peninsula have consistently failed. The country performs very badly on democratic process, fragile state, disinformation and weapons of mass destruction.

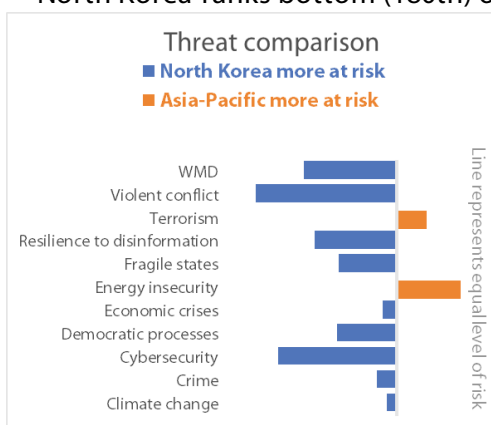
Background and key issues

A vestige of its 'military first' policy, North Korea has the third largest military on active duty in the world, with a standing army of [1 469 000](#) soldiers. In 2013, this policy was replaced with the 'progress in tandem' policy, which emphasised economic progress and guaranteed security against South Korean or American incursion by nuclear development. The country has nuclear weapons and ballistic missile [programmes](#), and is believed to have chemical and biological weapon capabilities. Its [nuclear-capable](#) intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) are considered capable of [reaching](#) Japan, South Korea and the United States. North Korea continues to develop its nuclear arsenal and to [increase missile testing](#). The country has used cyber-attacks and cyber theft to amass up to [US\\$1.3 billion](#) in foreign and virtual currency, circumventing international sanctions. North Korea ranks 37th on the [2023 Fragile States Index](#), with a particularly weak score for state legitimacy. Its government ranks 171st out of 180 countries on the [2022 Global Corruption Perception Index](#). Thousands of political prisoners are known to be [interned](#) in prison camps.



New security and hybrid threats

North Korea ranks bottom (180th) on the [2023 Global Press Freedom Index](#). The state security apparatus is extensive, controlling citizens' residence, travel, employment, clothing, appearance, food and family life. The population is classified according to their '[Songbun](#)' (a status system assessing a citizen's loyalty to the government based on their family history up to the third generation). The priority given to the nuclear programme, [ideology](#) of self-reliance, mismanagement and corruption impede long-term growth. On 14 July 2022, North Korea [recognised](#) non-government controlled Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine as independent states (only the third country to do so, after Russia and Syria) and continues to supply [military equipment](#) to Russia.



EU involvement

The EU has a policy of 'critical engagement' towards North Korea, with a view to diminishing tensions in the Korean peninsula, upholding a nuclear non-proliferation regime and improving the human rights situation. It applies [sanctions](#) against Pyongyang, implementing the UN Security Council Resolutions and adopting autonomous restrictive measures (the [latest](#) on 21 April 2022). Meanwhile, it has contributed over €135.7 million in [aid funding](#) to North Korea since 1995, mostly for food assistance, but also disaster relief and poverty alleviation. EU-North Korea trade in goods fell dramatically after 2013. In 2019, the last year before the pandemic, it amounted to a mere €7 million (0.2% of North Korea's external trade). The EU has maintained diplomatic relations with North Korea since 2001, but has no delegation in Pyongyang. On 30 May 2022, G7 countries and the HR/VP [condemned](#) 'in the strongest terms' a further intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test, conducted on 25 May 2022. In May 2024, the [EU sanctioned](#) nine additional individuals and entities involved in activities related to illegal weapons programmes and supporting Russia's war on Ukraine.

North Macedonia

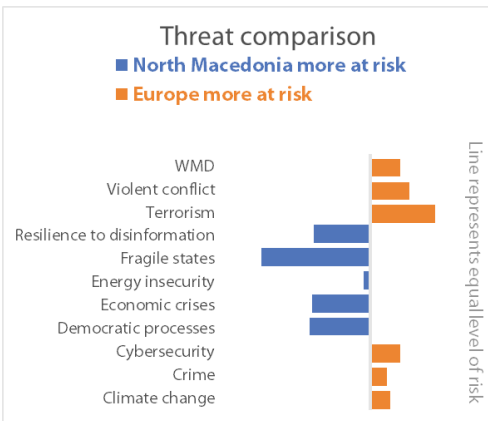
North Macedonia ranks 21st on the Normandy Index. Although it performs less well than the European average on democratic processes, resilience to disinformation and fragile states indicators, it outperforms the average for cybersecurity, terrorism and WMD.

Background and key issues

North Macedonia gained independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991. Today, the country scores within the top quartile of countries on the democratic processes indicator. Through the June 2018 [Prespa Agreement](#), the country changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, in exchange for Greece ending its veto on its EU and NATO accession. Following the signature of North Macedonia's accession protocol in February, the country officially joined NATO as the Alliance's 30th member in March 2020. North Macedonia's Assembly elected the current composition of the [Government](#) of the Republic on 28 January 2024.

New security and hybrid threats

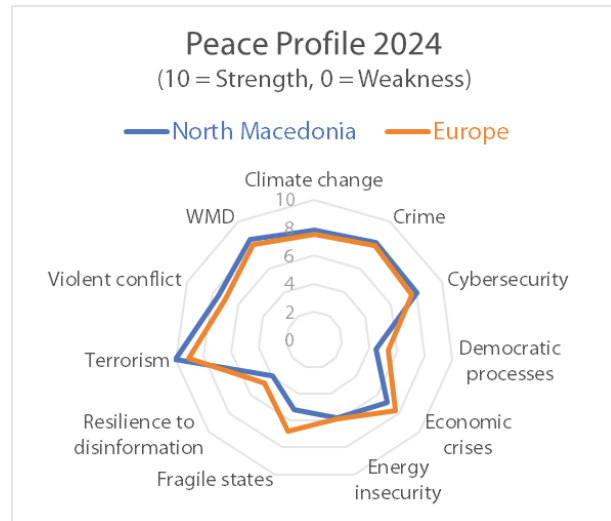
Since independence, North Macedonia has made progress on developing a democratic society and open-market economy. This has included reforms such as registering property, gaining credit access and protecting minority investors. North Macedonia is the only middle-income country ranked by the [World Bank](#) among the top-20 countries globally when it comes to [ease of doing business](#). Its



progress on economic reform is demonstrated in its strong economic crisis score. North Macedonia significantly progressed on press freedom: from 57th on the 2022 [Press Freedom Index](#) to 38th in [2023](#) and 36th in [2024](#). To foster the development of a safe, secure, reliable and resilient digital environment, the government adopted a 2018-2022 [National Cyber Security Strategy and Action Plan](#). The European Commission 2023 [report](#) on the country notes that there is inadequate oversight of the use of personal data for election campaign purposes and that existing counter-disinformation measures are not very effective, illustrating the reasons for the poor performance on the relevant indicators.

EU involvement

[North Macedonia](#) was the first Western Balkan country to sign a stabilisation and association agreement with the EU (in 2004); just one year later, it became a candidate country. On 26 March 2020, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with North Macedonia. The accession negotiations were officially launched on 19 July 2022. The EU allocated [€664 million](#) of funding to North Macedonia through the IPA II instrument for 2014-2020, and some €14.162 billion under [IPA III](#) for the six Western Balkans countries for 2021-2027. The EU supports the strengthening of [transport and energy connectivity](#), within the Western Balkans and with the EU, through a new connectivity package, road improvements and the implementation of the regional rail strategy, under the [Western Balkans Investment Framework](#). In 2023, the new [Reform and Growth Facility](#) for the Western Balkans was designed to support internal reforms in the Western Balkan countries, by providing certain benefits of EU membership even before EU accession. The Facility will provide up to €6 billion for 2024-2027.

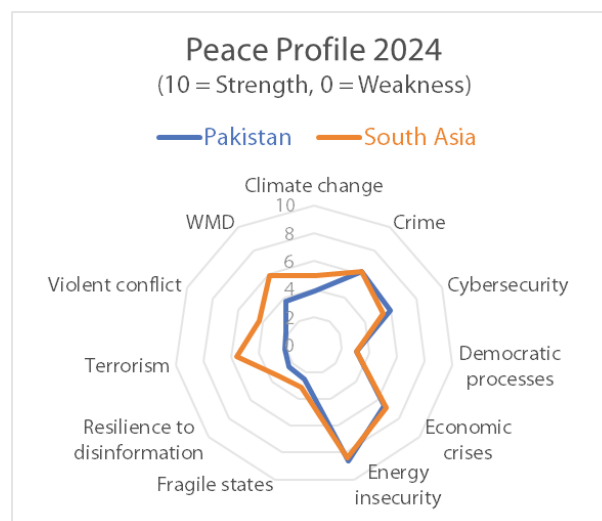


Pakistan

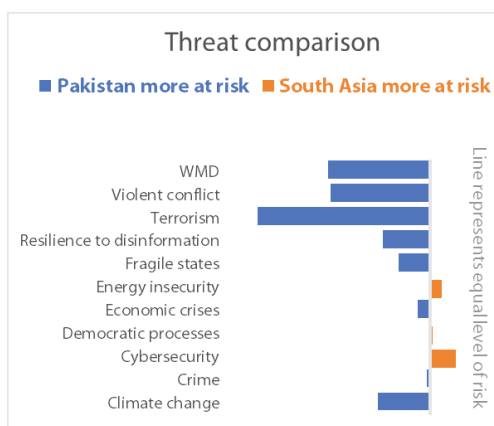
Pakistan ranks 122nd on the Normandy Index. Relations with terrorist groups, military interference, strained relations with India, separatism, vulnerability to climate change and a critical financial situation, all contribute to the instability of this fragile democracy affected by religious intolerance.

Background and key issues

Pakistan, home to the world's second-largest Muslim population, was the first Islamic republic, and has undergone phases of military rule and political instability. Pakistan ranks 31st most fragile of 179 states on the 2023 [Fragile State Index](#). Chronic dualism between political and military powers, with the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency playing a controversial role, prevents civilian institutions from taking direct control of the state. This affects relations with neighbouring India, which remain strained and volatile, due in particular to the unresolved [Kashmir](#) territorial conflict. Pakistan is [accused](#) of active terrorism sponsorship and of providing a safe haven for terrorist groups. The country is also dealing with an escalating [Islamist insurgency](#), run by Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, whose senior leadership is based in Afghanistan. The [Global Terrorism Index](#) placed Pakistan among the [10 countries](#) most impacted by terrorism without interruption since 2003; in 2024, it [ranked](#) 4th. It ranks 158th of 177 countries on the 2023 [Women, Peace and Security Index](#).



New security and hybrid threats



Pakistan faces other separatist threats: the most critical situation is in the south-western province of Balochistan, where the [terrorist threat](#) is also high. The 2024 [World Press Freedom Index](#) ranks Pakistan 152nd, underlining the severe risks to journalists. Pakistan is one of the world's most [disaster-prone](#) countries; it suffers from an economic crisis due to high inflation; a depreciating currency and low foreign currency reserves, which are at the origin of acute [food insecurity](#) and chronic [malnutrition](#) rates; a further serious problem is [water scarcity](#). However, due to progress on improving its anti-money-laundering regime, in October 2022 Pakistan was taken off the Financial Action Task Force's [GreyList](#), improving the country's access to international financing.

EU involvement

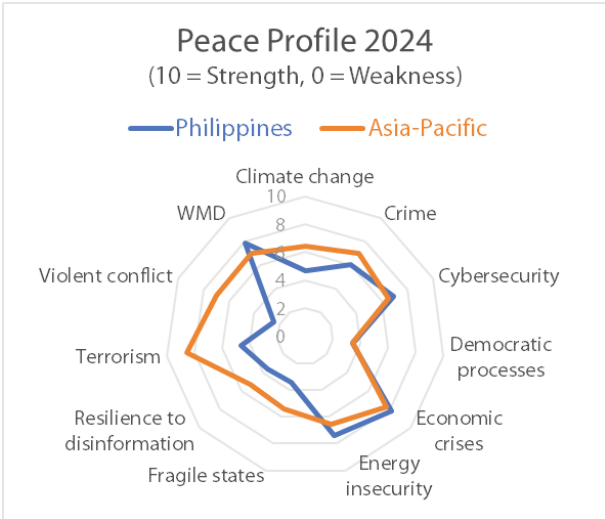
The EU and Pakistan strengthened their political and security relations through the 2019 EU-Pakistan strategic engagement plan ([SEP](#)), building on a 2004 [cooperation agreement](#). Beyond traditional areas such as peace and security, democracy, rule of law, good governance, human rights, migration, and trade, the SEP also covers energy and climate change. An [EU-Pakistan Joint Commission](#) meets annually to review progress on the agreement, with sub-groups for specific areas. In April 2023, the EU and Pakistan held the first [EU-Pakistan counter-terrorism dialogue](#) since 2018. In July 2023, the Commission decided to provide €16.5 million to [assist the most vulnerable](#) affected by conflict and climate-induced disasters. Pakistan is the largest beneficiary of the generalised system of preference plus ([GSP+](#)) scheme, giving preferential access to the EU market. However, Pakistan has been under threat of suspension due to [concerns](#) over human rights abuses. The GSP+ was provisionally [extended](#) to the end of 2027, to provide time for the adoption of the [2024-2034 GSP](#) proposed by the Commission in 2021. The EU is Pakistan's second most important trading partner after China; in 2022, it accounted for 12.4% of Pakistan's total [trade](#) and absorbed 30% of Pakistan's total exports.

Philippines

The Philippines ranks 92nd on the Normandy Index, lower than the Asia-Pacific average, in particular on terrorism and violent conflict. Crime rates are high, and thousands have died in a controversial 'war on drugs'; there is also violence from rebel groups and terrorists.

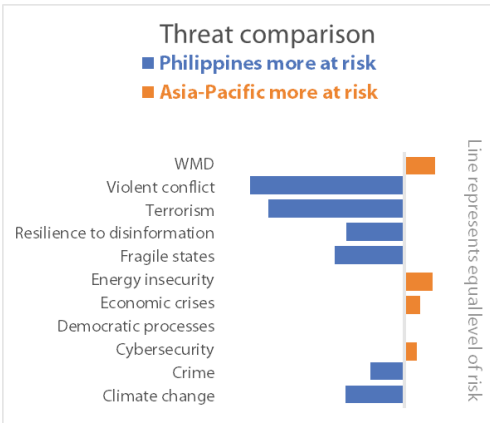
Background and key issues

The Philippines has a more pluralist political system than most of its neighbours in South-East Asia. However, it ranks in the top quarter of most fragile countries in the world. Ranking 61st on the [2023 Fragile States Index](#), one reason for this fragility is the relatively high level of terrorism, the second highest in the region (the Philippines ranks 19th on the 2024 Global Terrorism Index). The country has faced a Communist, Islamist, separatist and other movement insurgencies since independence. In 2016, ISIL/Da'esh-affiliated actors sought to establish an 'East-Asia province' in the country, occupying and holding the city of [Marawi](#) for five months. The violent crackdown on drug-related crimes, launched in 2016 under then President Rodrigo Duterte, has been widely criticised. On 30 June 2022, Ferdinand Marcos Jr was sworn in as 17th President of the Republic of the Philippines. President Marcos Jr's [measured rhetoric](#) on human rights is a stark contrast to the anti-rights positions of his predecessor, Duterte, whose catastrophic 'war on drugs' killed thousands.



New security and hybrid threats

The Philippines ranks 134th on the [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#) and 116th on the [2023 Corruption Perception Index](#). In 2022, the World Risk Index [ranked](#) the Philippines the country with the highest disaster risk: it is estimated that economic damage from climate change in the Philippines could reach 13.6% of the country's GDP. Deforestation has been [noted](#) as exacerbating this risk. Disinformation also remains a challenge: 51% of the population find it difficult to spot [fake news](#) in the media. The government refuses to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into possible crimes against humanity committed in the context of Duterte's 'war on drugs'. In January 2023, the ICC's pre-trial chamber [authorised](#) the Office of the Prosecutor to resume this investigation.



EU involvement

During 2014-2020, the EU allocated [€325 million](#) of development aid, focusing on two areas: the rule of law and inclusive growth (promoting renewable energy). The EU-Philippines Partnership and Cooperation Agreement came into force in 2018; talks on a free trade agreement were launched in 2015, but have been stalled since 2017. In 2023, the Philippines' [trade](#) minister stated hopes for an EU free trade agreement before 2028. At present, the Philippines enjoys duty-free access to EU markets for most of its exports under the GSP+ scheme. The EU remains the Philippines' [fourth largest trade partner](#). The Philippines took part in the [EU-ASEAN Commemorative Summit](#) held in Brussels on 14 December 2022. On 18 March 2024, the EU and the Philippines officially announced the resumption of negotiations for an ambitious, modern and balanced free trade agreement (FTA) – with sustainability at its core. On 6-9 May 2024, the [EU-ASEAN Business Council](#) meeting was held in Manila.

Russia

Russia ranks 108th on the Normandy Index, performing worse than the Eurasian average, except on cybersecurity, economic crisis and energy insecurity, due to elevated risks related to WMD, terrorism, violent conflict and crime. Security threats are likely to increase due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

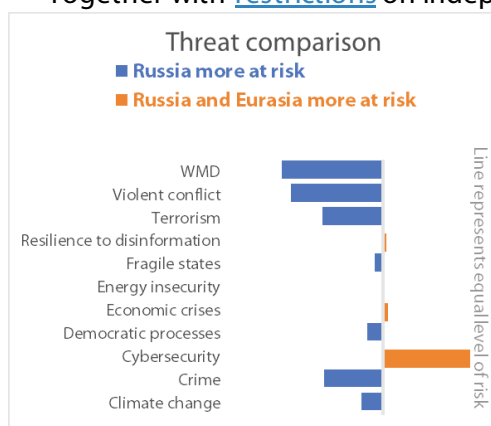
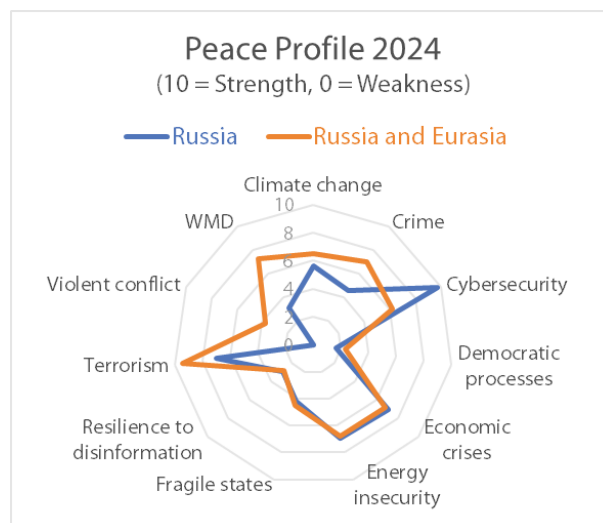
Background and key issues

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia rebuilt or altered many of its institutions. However, democratic processes are weak, the regime has become increasingly authoritarian, and is currently defined as an '[electoral autocracy](#)'. Russia [inherited](#) the Soviet Union's entire stock of [nuclear weapons](#). According to SIPRI, Russia has a total stockpile of some 5 889 nuclear warheads, of which 1 674 are deployed since January 2023. Russia also retained the UN Security Council Permanent Seat. In 2022, Russia had the highest [homicide rate](#) in the Eurasian region, at 8.21 per 100 000 people. Russia has a high energy security level, owing to its vast oil and gas [reserves](#), which it has long used as a foreign policy [tool](#).

New security and hybrid threats

Russia's full-scale and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, met with widespread global [condemnation](#), has significantly increased the security threat for Russia itself and the whole continent. Russia's indicators on violent conflict, WMD and terrorism have deteriorated. The March 2024 [terrorist attack](#) on the Moscow Crocus City Hall, claimed by the Islamic State and with at least 140 victims, revealed the deficiencies of a security apparatus currently more focused on repressing internal political dissent. Ukraine's retaliatory drone attacks on strategic Russian facilities, and especially [refineries](#), aim at curtailing its production capacity. Russia is [considered](#) one of the main sources of online disinformation campaigns, targeting both domestic and foreign audiences. Together with [restrictions](#) on independent media and civil society organisations, this has had a

severe [impact](#) on public opinion and in propagating Russia's narrative globally. Russia is considered to have advanced [cyber-attack capabilities](#). President Vladimir Putin secured a fifth term in a [landslide victory](#) in the March 2024 presidential election. These were denounced as [undemocratic](#) by Western countries and illegitimate by the European Parliament, and took place against a backdrop of increasing repression of public dissent and restriction of civil space. One month before, Putin's most critical opponent and Sakharov Prize laureate, [Alexei Navalny](#), died in a Siberian maximum-security prison, a death considered directly or indirectly [instigated](#) by Putin.



EU involvement

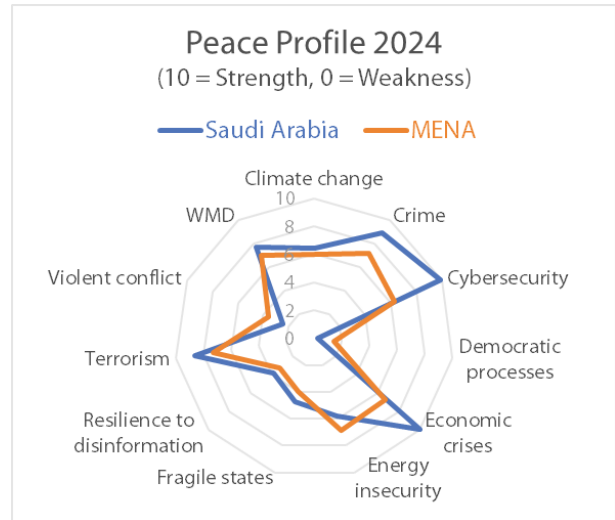
Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU imposed [sanctions](#), including individual restrictive measures, [economic sanctions](#) affecting over 50 % of pre-war trade, and media restrictions. Fossil fuel supply [diversification](#) resulted in Russia's share of EU energy imports [falling](#) by 25.5 % to 15.1 % in early 2022. The EU also imposed sanctions on Russia after its 2014 illegal annexation of Crimea, and for its use of chemical weapons, cyber-attacks and [human rights violations](#). European Parliament resolutions of [9 March 2022](#) and [1 June 2023](#) identify Russia as a major actor in [foreign interference](#) in democratic processes, disinformation campaigns and intelligence activities in the EU and its neighbourhood, including the [Western Balkans](#).

Saudi Arabia

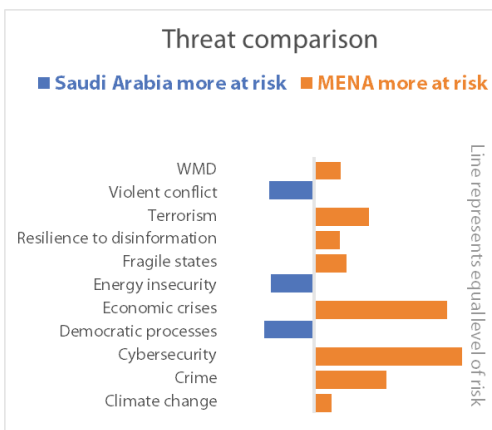
Saudi Arabia moved up to 48th on the Normandy Index, ranking high on cybersecurity and resilience to economic crisis. In the context of the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, Saudi-Iran rapprochement is seen as a stabilising, yet fragile prospect.

Background and key issues

Saudi Arabia has been engaged in a decades-long [proxy war](#) with Iran since the Iranian revolution of 1979. Relations were broken off in 2016, after protesters stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran over the execution of a dissident Saudi Shia cleric. A reconciliation, nominally driven by Saudi Arabia's crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, and Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was formally [announced](#) in China on 10 March 2023, when the two sides set out a two-month plan to normalise diplomatic and economic relations. Tehran's embassy in Riyadh [reopened](#) for the first time since 2016 in June 2023. Saudi Arabia's first ambassador to Iran since the resumption of diplomatic relations [arrived](#) in Tehran in September 2023. The Iran-Saudi Arabia rapprochement had a positive spill-over effect on conflicts in Yemen, Lebanon and Syria, but represents a potential challenge for Israel. Since the start of the Israel-Hamas war in October 2023, Saudi-Iranian rapprochement is seen as a stabilising force in the region, yet is being [tested](#) by geopolitical [developments](#) and diverging [interests](#).



New security and hybrid threats



Crown Prince since 2017, Mohammed Bin Salman instituted several economic and social reforms, including the wide-ranging ['Vision 2030'](#) plan, managed by the Economic and Development Affairs Council. Many had hoped reform would also lead to greater democratic freedom. However, this has [failed](#) to materialise. The Kingdom has a [poor human rights record](#). The country permits no independent media and scored 14th lowest on the [2024 World Press Freedom Index](#). The ongoing Israel-Hamas war has impacted the country in several ways, putting Israeli-Saudi relations normalisation [on hold](#). In [parallel](#), Yemeni Houthi involvement in the conflict could impair the fragile ceasefire in Yemen and further increase tensions in a volatile region.

EU involvement

In 1988, the EU entered into a [cooperation agreement](#) with the Cooperation Council for Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), which comprises Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). A regular EU-GCC dialogue aims to strengthen the stability of countries in the strategically important Gulf region, broaden economic and technical cooperation and strengthen cooperation on energy, industry, trade and services, agriculture, fisheries, investment, science, technology and the environment. The EU and Saudi Arabia [signed](#) a [cooperation arrangement](#) in 2021. Moreover, in May 2022, the EU adopted plans to create a [strategic partnership](#) with the GCC countries, aimed at strengthening relations in six key policy areas, including the green transition and sustainable energy security, as well as regional stability and global security. The EU, and the [European Parliament](#) in particular, have been critical of Saudi Arabia's [human rights](#) record and have condemned and expressed grave concerns over Saudi Arabia's [role in Yemen](#).

Serbia

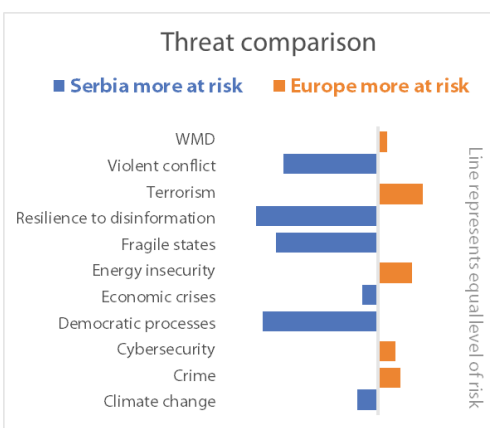
Serbia ranks 35th on the Normandy Index, scoring below the European regional average, in particular on violent conflict, democratic processes and resilience to disinformation. While it scores well on terrorism and energy insecurity, Serbia faces urgent challenges, such as the normalisation process with Kosovo.

Background and key issues

Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations, as a basis for resolving bilateral problems, including the [Belgrade-Prishtina dispute](#) are pre-conditions for Serbia's EU accession. However, a comprehensive normalisation of relations with Kosovo remains out of reach, despite some encouraging developments, such as the engagement in Ohrid, North Macedonia, to implement the EU-mediated deal, announced on 18 March 2023. On 17 December 2023, Serbia held snap [parliamentary elections](#), marked by the victory of the ruling Serbian Progressive Party (SNS) and alleged electoral irregularities that sparked a protest movement led by a coalition of opposition parties.

New security and hybrid threats

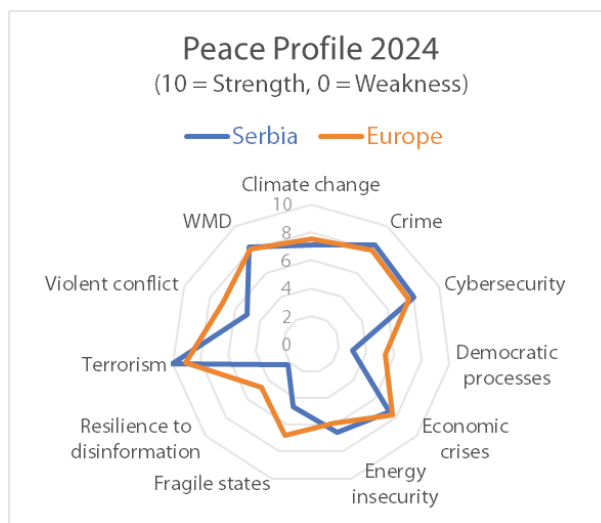
[Strategic competition](#) and [disinformation campaigns](#) between global powers are on the rise in Serbia. Russia is a traditional [geopolitical ally](#) and has provided diplomatic support for Belgrade, backing Serbia's position on non-recognition of Kosovo. Serbia is also involved in the tense situation in northern Kosovo, where the EU has [called](#) for 'immediate de-escalation, early elections with the



participation of Kosovo Serbs, and a return to dialogue on normalisation'. Serbia is [resisting](#) aligning with the EU to apply sanctions on Russia over its aggression in Ukraine. In addition, Serbia is a founding member of the [16+1 initiative](#), led by China. Due to insufficient political dialogue between the ruling coalition and the opposition, the country's [democracy rating](#) has also fallen. [Russia](#) remains Serbia's biggest arms supplier, although in increasing [competition](#) with China. Leaders from Serbia and Republika Srpska in Bosnia and Herzegovina campaigned against the adoption of a [UN resolution](#) commemorating the Srebrenica genocide, adopted on 23 May 2024.

EU involvement

Serbia officially applied for EU membership on 22 December 2009, and [accession negotiations](#) began in 2014. Some 18 out of 35 chapters of the *acquis* have been opened, including all in [cluster 1](#) on the fundamentals, and two chapters have been provisionally closed. [Pre-accession support](#) for Serbia and other countries amounts to €12.9 billion for 2021-2027 (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III funds). Serbia and Kosovo have been engaged in an [EU-mediated dialogue](#) since 2011, following the adoption of the 2010 [UN General Assembly Resolution 64/298](#). Serbia needs to implement the March 2023 Ohrid agreement as part of the accession negotiation requirements under Chapter 35 ('Other Issues'), which include normalisation of relations with Kosovo, among other things. Serbia's (non-)alignment with EU foreign policy became evident in February 2022 when it adopted [conclusions](#) in which it voiced support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but refrained from applying sanctions. The Commission's 2023 report [notes](#) that Serbia continues to participate in and contribute substantially to EU crisis management missions and operations under the CSDP.



Somalia

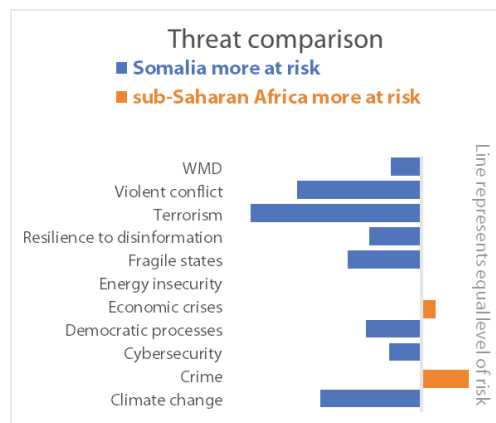
Somalia ranks 133rd on the Normandy Index and is more at risk of threats to peace than the African Union average. A weak central government struggles to control the Federal Republic's territory, facing tensions with some of its member states and frequent and massive armed group attacks on civilians.

Background and key issues

Somalia has struggled with the impact of civil war, which began in 1991 with the overthrow of dictator Jaalle Mohamed Siad Barre. In response to a weak central government, Somalia has adopted a decentralised federal model. The country is also tackling the jihadist and al-Qaeda affiliated terrorist Al-Shabaab insurgency that has plagued the country since 2008. Somalia's central government has little practical control over much of its territory, in particular, but not only, in the self-declared state of Somaliland. Somalia is highly vulnerable to climate change and ranks as one of the countries least adaptable to climate change at 178th of 185 countries on the Notre Dame Adaptation Index.

New security and hybrid threats

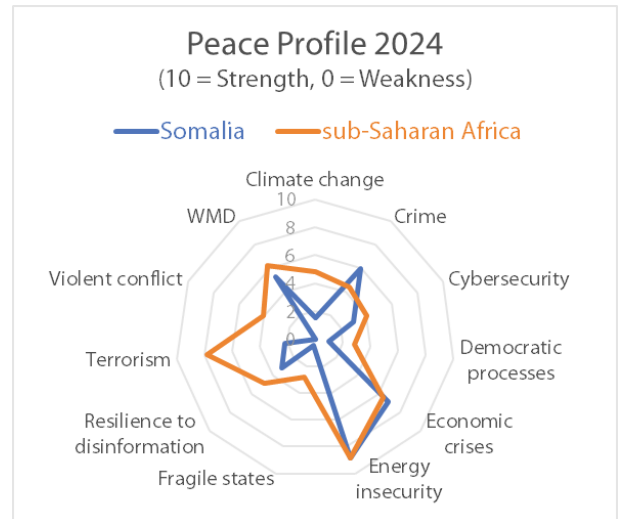
The [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#) ranks Somalia 7th worst, mainly due to the activities of different [jihadist networks](#). Most of Somalia's federal member states have a clan-based organisation, often detrimental to minority groups. Some even compete with militant groups for control of their land. Standing out as a more stable state, oil-rich Puntland has maintained control and basic public



services over most of its territory. [Puntland's](#) 31 March 2024 decision to act as an independent state, in protest against a Constitutional reform voted by the federal parliament has provoked tension. Self-declared Somaliland's deal giving [sea access to Ethiopia](#) in exchange for potentially recognising Somaliland's independence also caused federal government tension with both Somaliland and Ethiopia, and could destabilise the whole Horn of Africa. Extreme climate events such as droughts and floods exacerbate existing issues, including intercommunal tension and displacement. Over 6.9 million people need [humanitarian assistance](#) and 4 million face high levels of [food insecurity](#).

EU involvement

Somalia is a major focus of the [EU strategy for the Horn of Africa](#), which aligns several external policy programmes and instruments to tackle insecurity and its root causes in the area. Two EU military operations and one CSDP civil mission are based in Somalia: [EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta](#), [EUTM Somalia](#) and [EUCAP Somalia](#). Atalanta maintains a wide area of operations, despite the UN Security Council not extending its and other international forces' mandate to fight piracy and armed robbery within Somalia's territorial waters. It also coordinates with the new EUNAVFOR Aspides mission established in February 2024 to protect vessels from Yemeni Houthi militia attacks in the Red Sea. The EU supports the Somali national army (SNA) and the African Union transition mission in Somalia (ATMIS) through the [European Peace Facility](#) (€90 million for the SNA and €340 million for ATMIS since 2021). Efforts to help improve Somali military and political governance, to which the EU has made a [significant contribution](#), have [yet to succeed](#). The EU's humanitarian aid to Somalia amounted to €85.3 million in 2023 and €37 million in 2024.



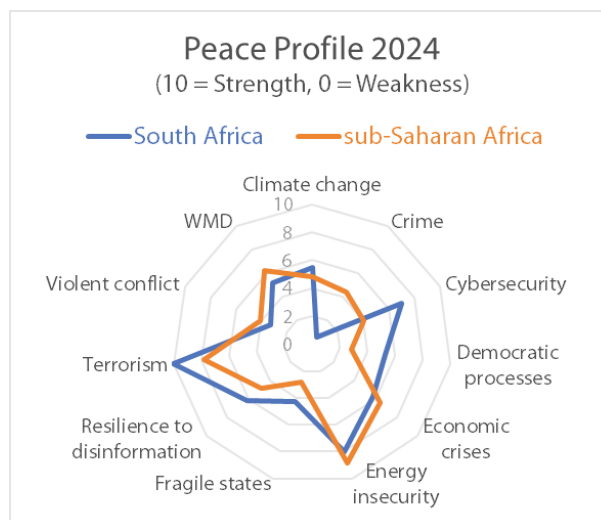
South Africa

South Africa ranks 80th on the Normandy Index, scoring higher than the sub-Saharan African average, in particular on cybersecurity, democratic processes and vulnerability to terrorism. While it is considered low-risk, and despite the end of apartheid in 1994, South Africa still struggles with extremes of inequality and high crime rates.

Background and key issues

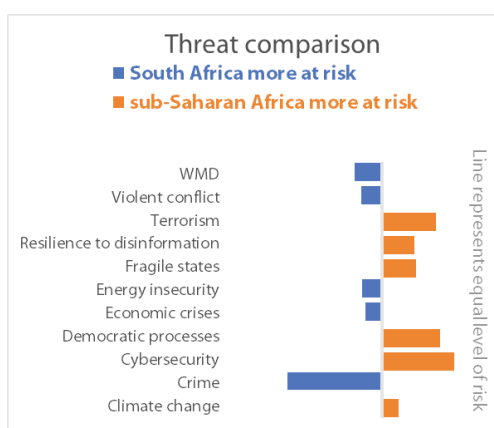
South Africa has one of the consistently highest income inequality index scores in the world and approximately 25 % of the country's population live below the poverty line. Despite South Africa's strong democratic processes and status as the second largest African economy, it therefore ranks 78th on the 2023 [Fragile States Index](#) (79th in 2022). South Africa's high violent crime rates contribute to this fragility. The homicide rate is rising, placing the country among the most vulnerable in the [world](#). General elections on 29 May 2024 confirmed the [predicted](#) fall in support for the African National Congress (ANC), which lost its parliamentary majority. Forging an alliance with four other parties to form a government, Parliament re-elected ANC leader Cyril Ramaphosa as President on 14 June 2024.

South Africa ranked 79th globally on the 2023 [Global Terrorism Index](#). Analysis suggests the country is being used as a platform for [terrorism financing](#), particularly for the Islamic State's activity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Northern Mozambique. In 1991, South Africa became the first country to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme. Although South African [energy security](#) is better than the sub-Saharan African average, the country experiences rolling blackouts due to mismanagement at the state-owned enterprise Eskom and an ageing generating capacity.



New security and hybrid threats

Owing in part to its pluralist political foundations, South Africa exhibits strong resilience to disinformation. It ranks 35th on the [2022 World Press Freedom Index](#) and has a relatively high score on the cybersecurity indicator for the sub-Saharan African region. Climate change poses particular risks for South Africa, as heatwaves, drought, floods and bushfires threaten agricultural and urban areas. South Africa ranks 95th on the [2022 Climate Vulnerability Index](#). In 2021, South Africa [committed](#) to carbon emission neutrality by 2050. In May 2024, it considered lodging a [complaint](#) at the World Trade Organization against the EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism. President Ramaphosa led an (ultimately unsuccessful) African [mediation mission](#) to Kyiv and Moscow in June 2023, to work on a negotiated diplomatic solution to the war in Ukraine.



EU involvement

The EU [considers](#) South Africa one of its 10 strategic partners in the world. Their strong relationship is based on the 2000 bilateral [Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement](#) and the [EU-SADC Economic Partnership Agreement](#) (provisionally in force since 2016). In 2021, the EU and South Africa agreed new [common objectives](#) for their development cooperation over the next seven years: sustainable, resilient, transformative and inclusive growth; reducing inequalities; and partnerships (including the peace/security dimensions of promoting rule of law, partnerships and alliances to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls). The EU is the country's largest [trading partner](#).

South Korea

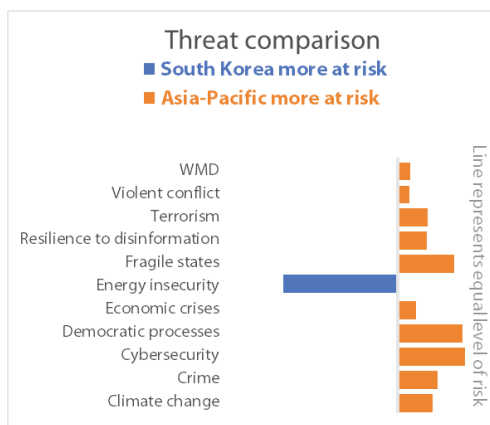
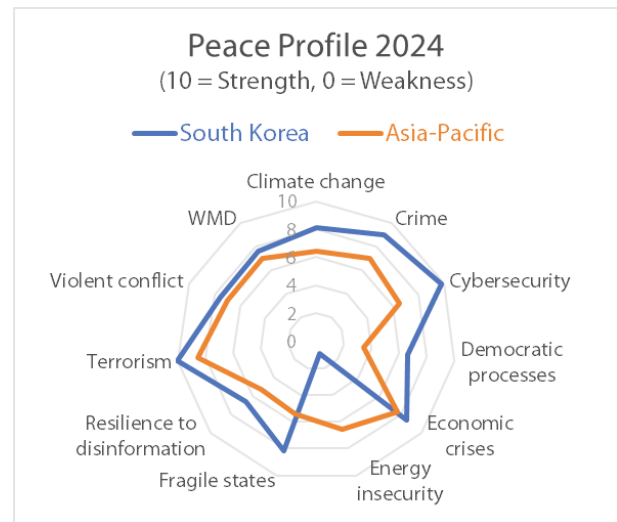
South Korea ranks 9th on the Normandy Index, making it the third best-performing country in Asia after Singapore and Malaysia. The country performs well on climate change, crime, cybersecurity and the economy. However, due to high crude oil and natural gas imports, it is vulnerable on energy insecurity.

Background and key issues

When the Korean War ended in 1953, the Republic of Korea counted among the [poorest](#) countries in the world. According to the [World Bank](#), its 2023 GDP per capita reached US\$33 121. The country ranks 10th on the UNDP [Human Development Index](#) and 22nd on the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) [Democracy Index](#). South Korea has not announced any major new target since its first [Nationally Determined Contribution](#) announced at COP26 and submitted to the UNFCCC in December 2021, setting a [target](#) to reduce emissions by 40 % below 2018 levels by 2030. South Korea has a [standing army](#) of 613 000 and spends around US\$48 billion or 2.8 % of GDP on [defence](#).

New security and hybrid threats

The high ranking on the UN Agency for digital technology (ITU) 2024 [ICT Development Index](#) is explained by South Korea's top score for connectivity, high broadband penetration and technical and legal measures. South Korea remains a [liberal democracy](#), however it exhibits a trend of 'substantial decline' in democratisation in the East Asia-Pacific region. It ranks 62nd on the [World Press Freedom Index](#). On 29 September 2021, the Democratic Party, which still holds a clear majority inside the Korean National Assembly, [decided](#) not to pursue amendments to the press law which would undermine media freedom. South Korea is vulnerable in the [energy sector](#), as it imports almost 93.5 % of its energy and natural resource consumption. In 2022, Korea spent US\$190.8 billion on [importing energy](#) and resources, equivalent to nearly 26.1 % of its total imports.



EU involvement

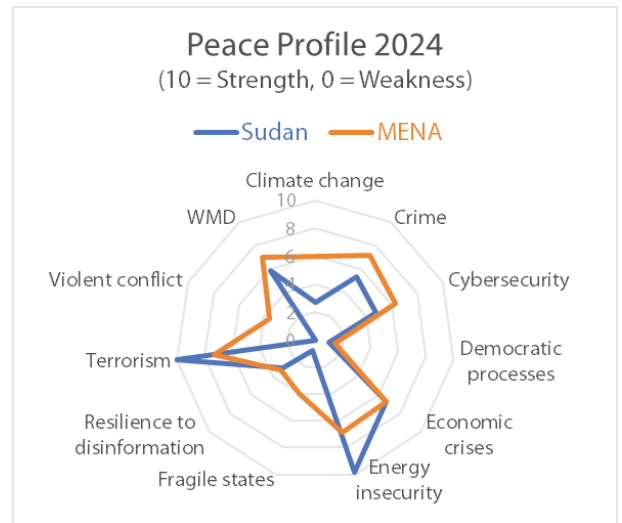
The EU is in trade and [diplomatic relations](#) with South Korea since 1963. Since 2010, South Korea is also one of the EU's strategic partners in Asia. The [EU-South Korea Free Trade Agreement](#) was not only the first of the EU's new generation of trade agreements, but also the first [submitted to the European Parliament](#) for its consent, under the Treaty of Lisbon; it [entered into force](#) on 13 December 2015 (having applied provisionally from July 2011). South Korea is the EU's [ninth largest](#) export destination for goods, while the EU is South Korea's third largest export market. In 2019, the EU was the [largest foreign investor](#) in South Korea in cumulative terms; EU investment in South Korea stood at US\$122.8 billion. The EU and South Korea have a strong joint interest in a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and work together to achieve lasting peace and stability. An agreement establishing a framework for South Korea's participation in EU crisis management operations was [signed](#) in 2014. The Republic of Korea is one of the EU's [priority partners](#) in Asia for enhanced security cooperation, working together on crisis management operations, maritime security, cyber security and the fight against terrorism. On 31 October 2023, the EU and Korea officially announced the launch of negotiations on an EU-Korea digital trade agreement. The second round of negotiations took place in Seoul from 20 to 22 February 2024.

Sudan

Sudan ranks 116th on the Normandy Index. The armed conflict between the two military factions in power has disrupted the path to democracy. It has triggered the displacement of over 8 million people, driven more than 17 million into high levels of food insecurity and caused the outbreak of serious diseases such as cholera. The situation in Sudan is a serious threat to regional stability.

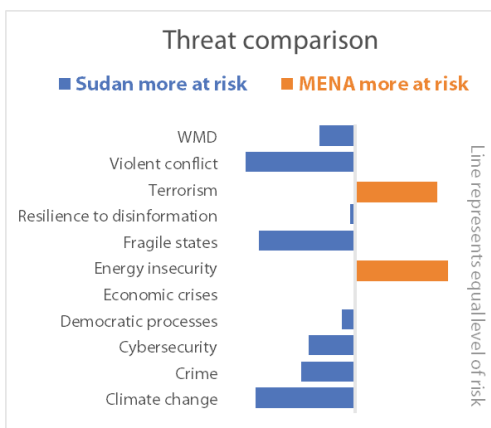
Background and key issues

After President Omar Al-Bashir was deposed by a coup in April 2019, a [transitional government](#) led by a civilian Prime Minister, Abdalla Hamdok, shared power with a Sovereign Council, headed by General Al-Burhan, a former Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) commander, and General 'Hemedti' Dagolo, chief of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group in control of the mining sector (mainly gold in Darfur). In November 2021, the military dissolved the Sovereign Council and the transitional government fell. Fighting between the SAF and RSF reached a new level of [violence](#) in the capital in April 2023. The fighting quickly spread across the country, with massive population displacements within Sudan and to [neighbouring countries](#). Several attempts to negotiate led by international mediators have failed to yield lasting results.



New security and hybrid threats

At the beginning of 2024, half the population of Sudan required [humanitarian assistance](#) due to floods, drought, disease, acute food insecurity and a precarious security situation within the country and in neighbouring countries. While the [humanitarian needs](#) are escalating rapidly, violations of international humanitarian law and killings of aid workers gravely hinder humanitarian access. This further fragilises the security situation in the region. Both sides have been trying to strengthen [alliances](#) inside and outside the country. Egypt has sided with Al-Burhan, while Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have sided with Hemedti. China and Russia have invested heavily in extracting Sudanese natural resources and preserving their [economic and security](#) interests. If finalised, a Russian security agreement with Sudan would allow the former to establish a logistical supply point in Port Sudan for military, including nuclear, vessels, and install up to 300 troops. A Russian military presence in the Red Sea would have multiple [strategic implications](#). Control of strategic regional waterways would give Russia (and [African partners](#)) a more prominent role in Middle Eastern geopolitics.



EU involvement

In April 2023, EU Member State-led operations [evacuated](#) most of the 1 700 EU citizens present in Sudan, as well as non-EU citizens. Finland's Minister for Foreign Affairs Pekka Haavisto (Special EU Envoy to Sudan in 2021), highlighted the risks of further [Russian engagement](#) in the region, considering the lack of Western democracies' involvement. Humanitarian supply distribution and refugee corridors are among the first EU priorities. The EU's humanitarian assistance to Sudan amounted to €128 million in 2023 (plus €37 million to address the impact in neighbouring countries), and €72 million as of 15 May 2024. The EU, France and Germany organised an [International Humanitarian Conference](#) for Sudan in April 2024 in Paris, where international donors pledged €2 billion in support (including €900 million from the EU and its Member States).

Syria

Ranking 138th on the Normandy Index, Syria is the least peaceful country in the world. It is a fragile state for which indicators on democratic processes, terrorism, resilience to disinformation and violent conflict are particularly low.

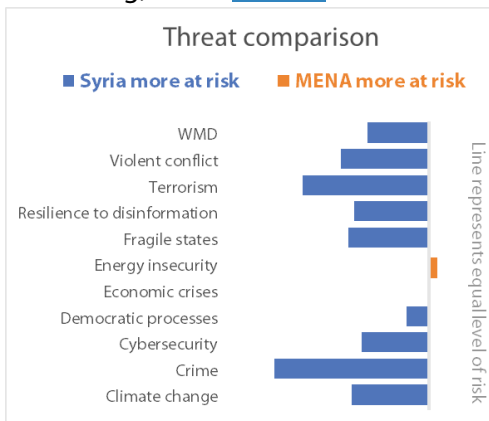
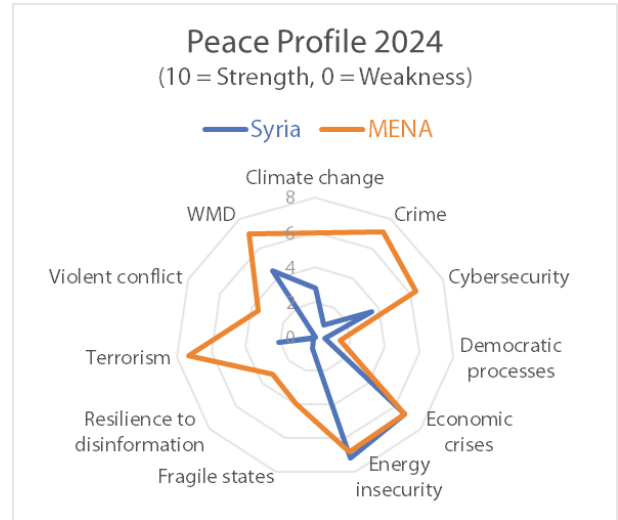
Background and key issues

Syria's low position on the Normandy Index is due to the ongoing impact of the Syrian civil war, which began in 2011. The war is [estimated](#) to have caused over half a million deaths, massive population displacement and destruction of infrastructure. From 2011 to 2016, the World Bank estimated cumulative [GDP losses](#) at US\$226 billion, four times the Syrian GDP in 2010. Over 90% of the population [suffer](#) from [poverty](#). Nearly 5.2 million Syrians are registered as [refugees](#) in neighbouring countries. An estimated 7.2 million are [internally displaced](#) and an estimated 16.7 million people need humanitarian assistance in Syria. Several global and regional actors, including the USA, Iran, Türkiye and Russia, intervene in the

ongoing war. The level of violence has receded, but the country suffers the long-term effects of instability. Ranking 5th on the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#), Syria saw a resurgence in terrorist activity in 2023, with deaths from terrorism reaching their highest since 2013. The [Global Coalition to Defeat ISIL/Da'esh](#) still has work to do to ensure the 'enduring end' of ISIL/Da'esh in the region.

New security and hybrid threats

The economic and social situation in Syria further deteriorated following the February 2023 7.8 magnitude [earthquake](#). The country continues to suffer from [hyperinflation](#) and a surging cost of living, which [worsen](#) the humanitarian crisis. In May 2023, Arab countries initiated [normalisation](#) with President Bashar al-Assad's regime, inviting him to the Arab League meeting in Saudi Arabia for the first time since the body suspended Damascus in 2011. Reconstruction of the country remains a major challenge. Western [sanctions](#) (particularly USA [imposed](#) sanctions under the 2019 [Caesar Act](#), which not only blocks [reconstruction funding](#) but also imposes secondary sanctions), are seen as blocking potential investment and reconstruction. In addition, amidst the Israel-Hamas war, presumed Israeli military [strikes](#) against Iranian targets in Syria and [Iran-backed](#) proxy group [attacks](#) against US military interests in the country, make the security situation more volatile.



EU involvement

The EU suspended cooperation with the Syrian government under the European Neighbourhood policy in 2011, in response to the repression of anti-government protests, and adopted sanctions against the Assad regime. The EU and its Member States are the largest contributors to the international response to the Syrian conflict, having [mobilised](#) over €33 billion since 2011, for [humanitarian, stabilisation and resilience assistance](#) in Syria and the region (Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Türkiye). In 2023, the EU allocated €186.5 million in humanitarian funding inside Syria and took a range of measures (including [exemptions](#) to the sanctions regime) to alleviate the impacts of the 2023 earthquake. Normalisation of relations is not an option for the EU without progress in implementing UN Security Council [Resolution 2254](#). However it works with international partners to address shared objectives, such as reducing violence. The eighth edition of the [Ministerial Brussels Conference](#) on 'Supporting the future of Syria and the region' will take place on 27 May 2024, in Brussels.

Thailand

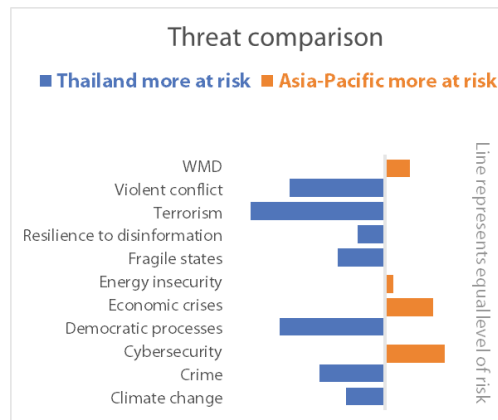
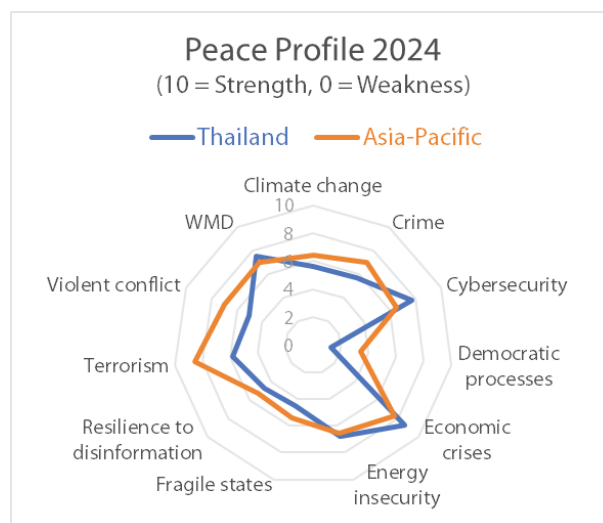
Thailand ranks 69th on the Normandy Index. Rapid economic growth has lifted the country from the low-income to upper-middle bracket in just a few decades, but its development has been marred by political instability, terrorism and recurrent military coups.

Background and key issues

A long-running insurgency in Muslim-majority southern Thailand has claimed over [7 000 lives](#) since 2004, affecting the country's security. Peace talks between the government and main rebel group, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN), have produced no progress. Since the 2023 [national elections](#), the political situation has focused to a considerable degree on whether changes to Article 112 of Thailand's criminal codes ('*lèse majesté* law' – which protects the monarchy from criticism by imposing penalties of 3 to 15 years imprisonment jail per offence) are legitimate. Thailand is an important member of ASEAN, established in 1967 in Bangkok.

New security and hybrid threats

Recent years have seen frequent [clashes](#) between reformers and pro-monarchy conservatives in Thailand. After five years of military rule, elections in 2019 installed a nominally civilian government, continuing the rule of the former junta. Elections in 2023 were '[peaceful and orderly](#)', explaining the improved score on 'democratic progress', but at the same time the space for democratic deliberation has been significantly reduced, not least through the application of the [lèse-majesté](#) law. Reflecting these restrictions on freedom of expression, Thailand ranks 106th on the [2023 Press Freedom Index](#). The [2023 Fragile States Index](#) ranks Thailand at 91st place, with political instability and the role of the military identified as particular areas of weakness. Thailand's energy policy currently [focuses](#) on reducing energy dependencies, seen as a big challenge. Thailand ranks as the 28th worst country on the [2023 Global Terrorism Index](#), a slight improvement on the previous year. Military [spending](#) is relatively low, at 1.4 % of GDP in 2023.



EU involvement

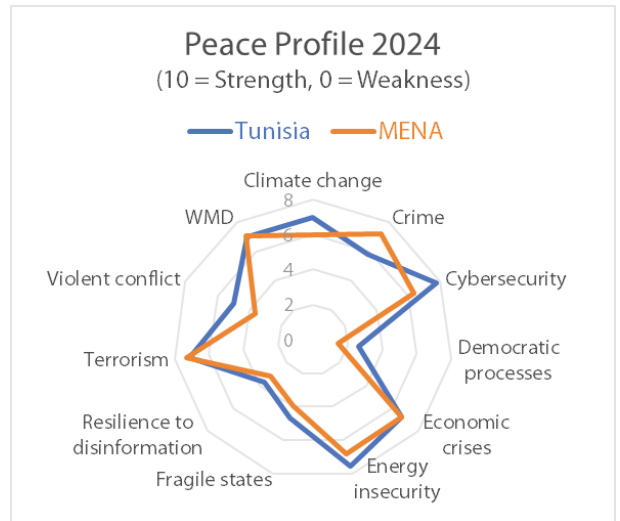
After the 2014 military coup, the EU broke off talks with Thailand on a partnership and cooperation agreement (PCA) and a free trade agreement (FTA). The relative restoration of civilian rule in 2019 opened the door to [renewed engagement](#) and, following the Council Conclusions of 2019, the EU began to broaden its engagement with Thailand by preparing for the PCA's signature. The negotiations on the PCA resumed on 13 July 2021 and were concluded in September 2022. The PCA was signed on 22 December 2022. EU bilateral aid includes projects supporting Thai exporters, refugees from Myanmar, and workers in the fisheries sector. The EU is Thailand's fourth [trading partner](#) (after China, Japan and the USA), accounting for 7.5 % of the country's total trade. Thailand is the EU's 26th largest trading partner worldwide. The EU is the second-largest investor in Thailand after Japan. On 23 March 2023, both sides announced the relaunch of trade negotiations. The [first negotiation round](#) took place from 18 to 22 September 2023 in Brussels. As a member of ASEAN, Thailand cooperates with the EU in multilateral fora. The EU renewed its commitment to [human rights and democracy](#) in the country on 27 May 2024, extending its 2020-2024 action plan on human rights and democracy until 2027.

Tunisia

Tunisia ranks 60th on the Normandy Index. It is considered less at risk than the MENA country average, and it performs better than the MENA average on energy insecurity, climate change, cybersecurity and violent conflicts. However, Tunisia's performance on crime is poor.

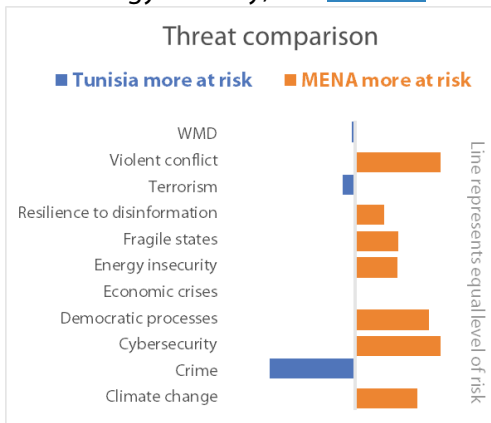
Background and key issues

Since the removal of former president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali during the 2011 Jasmine Revolution, Tunisia has undergone a range of democratic reforms. The revolution's fallout has pushed the country up the [Fragile States Index](#), from 118th place in 2010, to 96th in 2023. Tunisia is also [affected](#) by regional instability and conflict, particularly in neighbouring Libya. President Kais Saïed dissolved the Assembly in July 2021. A constitutional referendum [took](#) place on 25 July 2022, a year to the day after Saïed seized broad powers in a move his opponents have called a coup. Tunisia held [run-off elections](#) on 29 January 2023 (the first round was held on 17 December 2022). The prospect of a [presidential election](#) in Tunisia by the end of 2024 seems increasingly likely according to the electoral body in charge of elections and hinted at by the president himself. A specific date remains elusive, however, casting doubt on the process.



New security and hybrid threats

Tunisia ranks 121st of 180 countries on the 2023 [Press Freedom Index](#). The country scores well on energy security, as it [sources](#) around 85 % of its needs from domestic oil and gas. In April 2022, the



Energy Ministry [announced](#) a 3 % monthly rise in fuel prices – a 30 % annual increase by the end of 2022. The heterogeneous [regional development](#) and equality gap between the north and south of the country is a permanent source of internal instability. A disillusioned youth and an economically fragile population in the south, leads to anti-government rebellion and terrorist action. In 2015, Tunisia suffered two major terrorist attacks in tourist hotspots, leading to a drastic [decline](#) in the tourist economy. A nationwide [state of emergency](#), first imposed after a suicide attack on a police bus on 24 November 2015, remains in place. In 2020, three people died in a suicide bombing near the US embassy. Tunisia ranked 85th on the [2023 Global Terrorism Index](#).

EU involvement

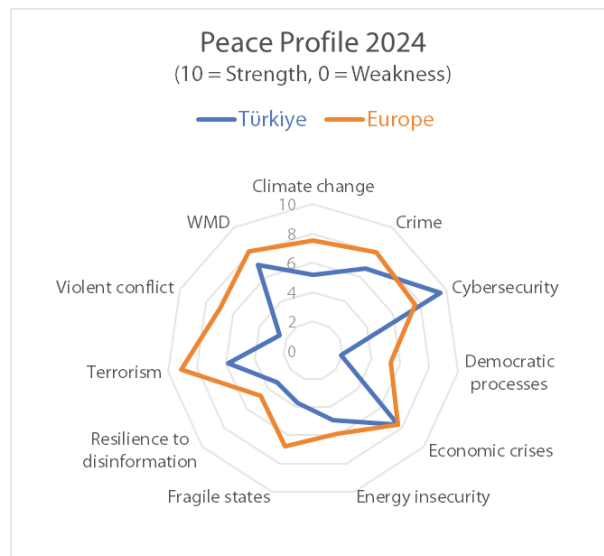
The EU-Tunisia Association Agreement was signed in 1995. The 2011 revolution marked a turning point in [EU-Tunisia relations](#) and led to the establishment of a privileged partnership in 2012. Between 2011 and 2017, EU assistance to Tunisia amounted to €2.4 billion. The EU and Tunisia are also currently negotiating a free trade agreement. From 2017 to 2020, the EU's bilateral assistance averaged €300 million per year. Tunisia is also eligible for funding under the IcSP and Erasmus+. On 10 September 2020, the HR/VP met President Saïed in Carthage. Following the announcement of the referendum and new elections in 2022, the European External Action Service (EEAS) [stated](#) that the EU was monitoring the situation in the country and 'took note' of the decisions made by its president. On 12 February 2022, the HR/VP [outlined](#) the possibility of suspending macro-financial assistance to Tunisia. The HR/VP also expressed concern following the 2023 elections, stressing the need to include broader civil society and political parties in governance of the country. On 16 July 2023, a Memorandum of Understanding was [signed](#), under which, among other things, the EU agreed to give Tunisia financial and technical support to deter Europe-bound irregular migration.

Türkiye

Türkiye ranks 94th on the Normandy Index, notably due to a fragile macroeconomic stabilisation, weak democratic processes and violent conflicts. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan carried presidential elections in May 2023. However, the ruling conservative AKP was less successful in 2024 local elections.

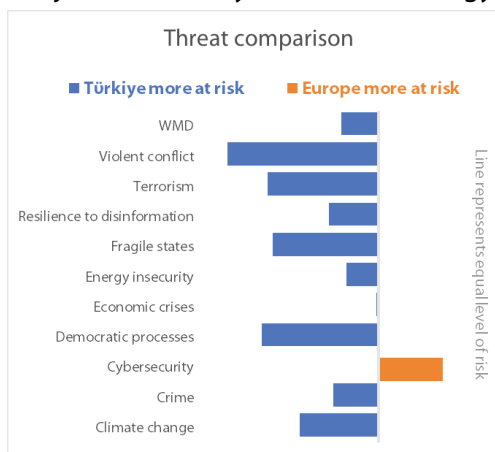
Background and key issues

A failed [military](#) coup in 2016 was followed by constitutional reform and strengthening of the presidential regime, [repression](#) of political opposition and participation in foreign conflicts and maritime disputes in the [eastern Mediterranean](#) with EU Member States. Türkiye ranks 62nd on the [Fragile States Index](#) and 29th on the impact of terrorism in the [2023 Global Terrorism Index](#). This ranking reflects attacks by ISIL/Da'esh and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) was re-elected in May 2023 with 52.18 % of the vote. However, 2024 [local elections](#) reasserted the opposition as a political force and reinforced Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu as the president's chief rival. Opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) retained Ankara and gained 15 other mayoral seats in cities nationwide.



New security and hybrid threats

Türkiye faces major insecurity, having been involved in foreign [military interventions](#). The country's resilience to disinformation and media freedom is amongst the lowest globally, reflective of its ranking at 165th on the [2023 Press Freedom Index](#). Imprisonment of [journalists](#) continues to be a major issue. Türkiye has a 74% energy [import dependency](#); local [oil production](#) meets only 7% of the demand. However new discovery of natural gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean might provide substantial energy resources. The new government appears to be abandoning the costly monetary strategy of keeping the currency on a tight leash by any means necessary. Late nominations to key economic posts indicated that the country is moving away from unorthodox '[Erdoğanomics](#)'. Türkiye's Central Bank governor Hafize Gaye Erkan resigned on 2 February 2024. While [inflation](#) remains high at 75.45% in May 2024, Standard & Poor's Global Ratings raised its unsolicited long-term sovereign credit ratings on Türkiye to '[B+](#) with positive [outlook](#)' on 3 May 2024.



EU involvement

Türkiye has been in a [customs union](#) with the EU since 1995 and an [accession country](#) since 2005. The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) funding adopted in 2021-2022 amounts to €453.4 million. Relations with the EU have deteriorated in recent years. In 2017, the co-legislators agreed to cut pre-accession funds owing to failing democratic standards. In 2020, following Türkiye's military action in Syria and [Libya](#) and illegal drilling activities in the eastern Mediterranean, the EU put Türkiye's accession application on hold. In total, Türkiye has received approximately €10 billion in EU aid, under the EU Facility for Refugees in Turkey and other refugee assistance, since 2011. Following the February 2023 earthquake, the International Donors' Conference [pledged](#) a total €7 billion, of which €6.05 billion was grants and loans for Türkiye. Türkiye's '[non-binary policy](#)' in Russia's war on Ukraine reflects a very low 10% [alignment rate](#) with the EU stance on foreign and security policy in 2023, compared with 8% in 2022.

Ukraine

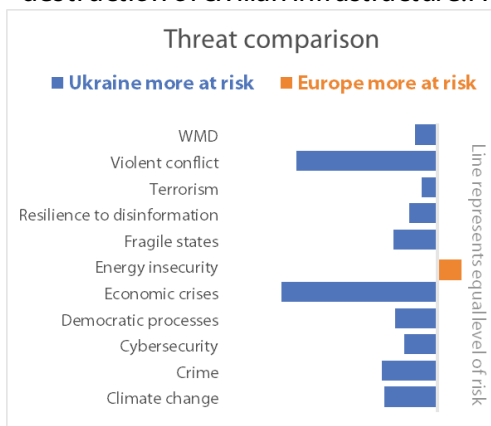
Ukraine ranks 118th on the Normandy Index. Since February 2022, Russia's illegal and unjustified war of aggression is deeply disrupting human, economic and political activity. The EU remains committed to providing further political, military and financial support to help Ukraine exercise its right of self-defence.

Background and key issues

In 2013, President Viktor Yanukovich's [decision](#) not to sign an association agreement with the EU sparked major [pro-European protests](#). In February 2014, the Ukrainian Parliament [voted](#) to remove Yanukovich from power, citing abandoning office as grounds. Russia responded by annexing the Crimean Peninsula in March 2014, launching a hybrid war, including initially limited military aggression in eastern Ukraine and [repetitive](#) military build-up at the country's borders. Russia then launched a full-scale war on Ukraine on 24 February 2022, in violation of international law. Since then, over 6.4 million [refugees](#) have left the country.

New security and hybrid threats

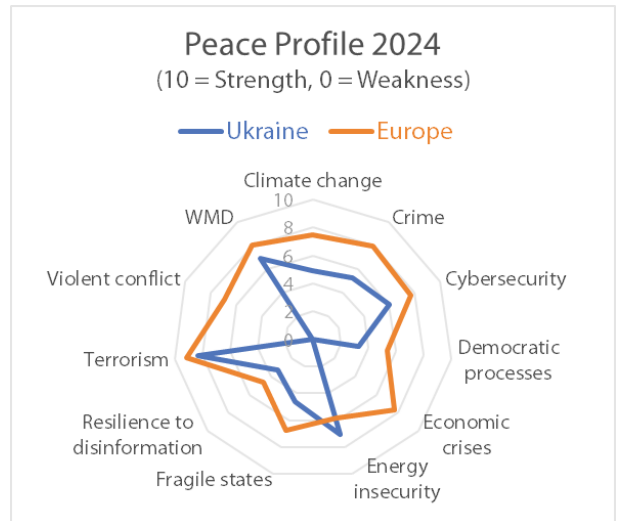
[Ukraine](#) lost control of around 17% of its territory since 2022, including the Crimean peninsula, regions bordering the Azov Sea, the major part of Luhansk region, large parts of the Donbas region and part of the Black Sea coast. Ukraine [regained](#) control of north-east and southern parts of the country and [disabled](#) a third of the Russian Black Sea fleet. The regained territory [uncovered](#) the scale of Russian forces' atrocities. The war is [causing](#) the loss of thousands of lives and massive destruction of civilian infrastructure. According to a Ukraine, European Commission and [World Bank](#)



joint [assessment](#), the damage inflicted by end-2023 is estimated at US\$152 billion, and economic losses at US\$499 billion. Military [expenditure](#) grew 51% in 2023, to US\$64.8 billion, representing 37% of GDP. As war has disrupted both production and distribution of electricity, with Europe's biggest [nuclear](#) power plant at Zaporizhzhya [occupied](#) by Russia, energy insecurity [remains](#) a serious concern. The detrimental impact of war on the [environment](#), including destruction of the [Kakhovka](#) dam on 6 June 2023 and consequent [flooding](#), could further [worsen](#) Ukrainian resistance to [environmental](#) factors and climate change.

EU involvement

EU-Ukraine relations are based on an [Association Agreement](#), including a DCFTA, signed in 2014. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the EU introduced broad [sanctions](#) against Russia. Since February 2022, the EU, its Member States and its financial institutions have allocated [€98.5 billion](#) to Ukraine, including budget support, emergency assistance, crisis response, humanitarian aid, as well as around €32 billion of military assistance measures, of which [€11.1 billion](#) was mobilised under the [European Peace Facility \(EPF\)](#). To support Ukraine's army, the EU established a Military Assistance Mission ([EUMAM Ukraine](#)). Initially established for two years, EUMAM is expected to train [60 000](#) Ukrainian soldiers by the end of summer 2024. Moreover, the EU approved the [Ukraine Facility](#), worth [€50 billion](#), to provide predictable financial support in 2024-2027. To reduce [energy](#) insecurity in Ukraine, its power grid was synchronised with the continental European power grid in March 2022. The EU leaders decided to grant Ukraine [EU accession candidate](#) status in June 2022 and to open accession negotiations in December 2023. Accession [negotiations](#) started with the first intergovernmental conference on 25 June 2024.

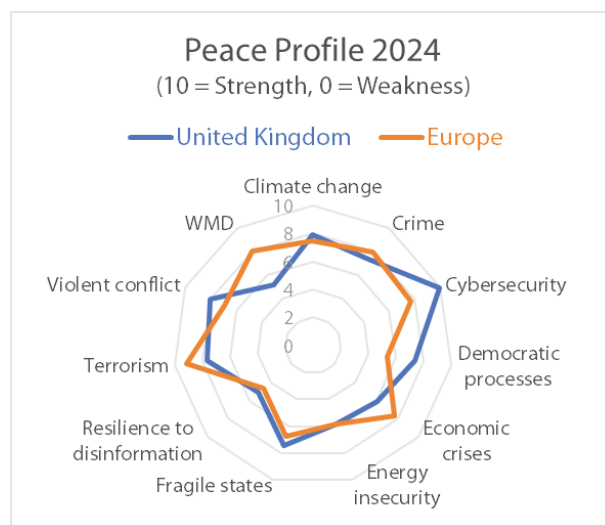


United Kingdom

The United Kingdom ranks 17th on the Normandy Index, indicating rather low levels of risk. It performs slightly better than the regional average on a majority of indicators, but scores markedly badly on WMD and economic crisis. It scores particularly well globally on cybersecurity.

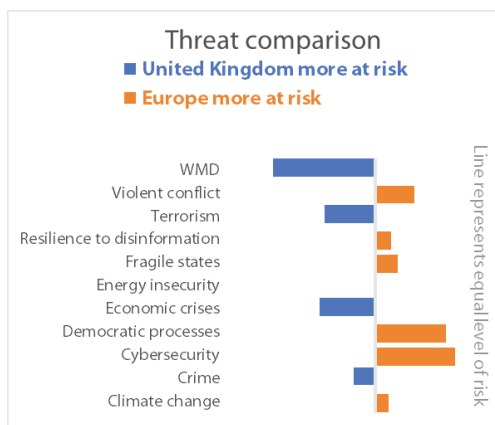
Background and key issues

The United Kingdom (UK) has a well-established democratic tradition in the form of a parliamentary system. While it has a strong education system and high [per capita GDP](#), it also has one of the highest levels of [income inequality](#) in [Europe](#). The 2022 [Human Development Index](#) ranked the UK 15th of the 193 countries measured. The Economist Intelligence Unit's [Democracy Index](#) places the UK 18th overall, with the country performing exceptionally well on electoral process and pluralism. While ranked 37th on the 2023 [Global Peace Index](#), it is 'a significant global [arms and defence exporter](#) and possesses an arsenal of [nuclear weapons](#). Consequently, it has the 118th lowest score for WMD on the Normandy Index. The UK scores above the regional average on risks connected to [terrorism](#).



New security and hybrid threats

The [cost of living](#) rose sharply in the UK in the last three years, with high inflation and soaring prices for food, energy and accommodation. A nose-diving domestic [human rights](#) record and erosion of related protections has been coupled with reneging on international obligations. As a net [importer of energy](#) reliant on [gas](#), the UK was [hit hard](#) by the war in Ukraine. Following the 2021 Integrated Review of its strategic defence and security policy, the UK decided to increase its [nuclear stockpile](#) from 225 to 260 warheads for the first time since the Cold War. While the country has a high level of press freedom, ranking 23rd on the 2024 [Press Freedom Index](#), it scores below the Europe average on resilience to misinformation and has been an object of [Russian interference](#) in its political processes. The Normandy Index ranks the UK as the world's third most protected from cyber-threats.



EU involvement

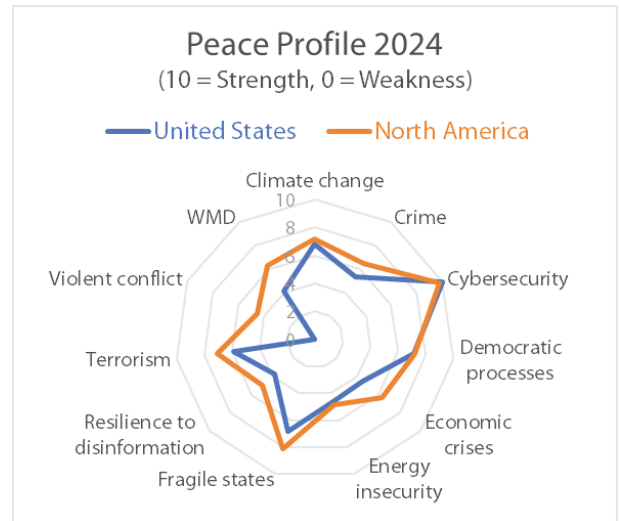
As the UK is no longer an EU Member State since 31 January 2020, mutual relations are now governed by the EU-UK [Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#) (TCA). While the TCA does not [provide](#) a Treaty-based framework for foreign policy or security and defence cooperation, it refers to mutual recognition of 'the importance of global cooperation to address issues of shared interest'. These include upholding the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, combating terrorism and countering proliferation of WMDs and the illicit weapons trade. The TCA also establishes a framework for EU-UK cooperation on cybersecurity and sharing of classified information. Furthermore, EU-UK cooperation takes place through NATO, in the areas defined by the three [NATO-EU joint declarations](#). Both sides [cooperated](#) successfully, including through the G7, in the context of [Russia's war on Ukraine](#), providing aid, weapons and coordinating sanctions. The UK has joined the [military mobility](#) project within the EU's permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). [Economic ties](#) are also strong, with the EU the [UK's](#) largest [trading partner](#). After years of [tense relations](#), the [Windsor Framework](#) agreement brought improvement and there are widespread expectations that the 2024 change of power in the UK may herald a new [era of rapprochement](#), including on [foreign and security policy](#).

United States of America

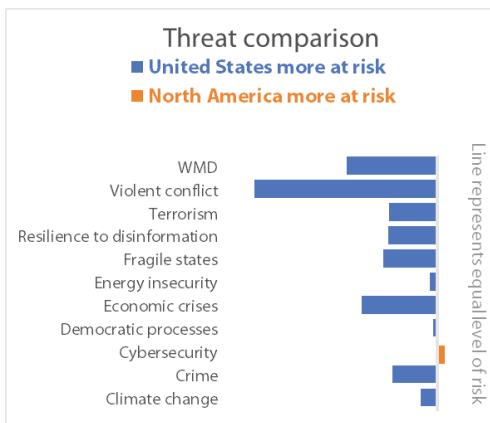
The USA ranks 90th on the Normandy Index. It faces threats in the WMD domain, high levels of political polarisation, gun violence and domestic terrorism and a rising national debt that is widely considered as unsustainable.

Background and key issues

The USA ranked 131st of 163 countries on the [2023 Global Peace Index](#), falling from 122nd place in 2021. High military expenditure relative to GDP, continued engagement in external conflict, high levels of weapons imports and exports, considerable incarceration rates, and ongoing partisan disagreement about the functioning of the country's democratic institutions, all contribute to the continued low level of peacefulness relative to other high-income countries. The USA has the [highest rate of gun violence](#) of this group of countries. In 2023, [19 063 firearm homicides](#) and 655 mass shootings were committed. After Fitch and Standard & Poor's downgraded ratings from 'AAA' to 'AA+', Moodys [lowered](#) the credit rating outlook to 'negative', citing [debt affordability](#) and political polarisation.



New security and hybrid threats



A nuclear power, the 2019 withdrawal from the [Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty](#) with Russia and 2020 withdrawal from the 1992 [Open Skies Treaty](#) were alarming developments. Although the USA extended the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, the latter party [suspended](#) the treaty in February 2023 and the parties no longer share data on nuclear weapons. In September 2023, the USA issued a [Strategy for Countering WMD](#) that recognises China as a 'pacing challenge' and Russia as an 'acute threat'. The USA has seen a drop in fatalities from terrorism since 2002, but is suffering from an [increase in domestic terrorism](#), [high exposure](#) to disinformation and political polarisation ahead of 2024 presidential elections,

resulting in the failed assassination attempt on former president Donald Trump on 13 July 2024.

EU involvement

The USA is a strategic EU [partner](#) in the promotion of peace and security globally. In 2011, the USA signed a [Framework Partnership Agreement](#) on participation in CSDP operations and on 26 April 2023, the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the US Department of Defense [signed](#) an [administrative agreement](#) that provides for stronger transatlantic cooperation in specific areas of defence. US-EU cooperation also takes place through NATO, in the areas defined by the [NATO-EU](#) joint declaration. On counter-terrorism, bilateral agreements include: an [Operational Agreement](#) between the USA and Europol, the EU-US Terrorist Finance Tracking Programme [Agreement](#), and the EU-US Passenger Name Record Agreement. In July 2023, the European Commission issued an [adequacy decision](#) under a new EU-US Data Privacy Framework, [agreed](#) in March 2022 and enabled by [Executive Order 14086](#) signed in October 2022. In December 2020, the EU issued a new [transatlantic agenda for global change](#), which includes new forms of cooperation in trade and technology, democracy, security and on the environment. The [EU-US Trade and Technology Council](#), [EU-US dialogue on security and defence](#), the dialogue on China and consultations on the Indo-Pacific launched in 2021, with dialogue on Russia following in 2022. The US-EU [Task Force](#) on Energy Security, [announced](#) in March 2022, [contributed](#) to reducing EU dependence on Russian energy.

Venezuela

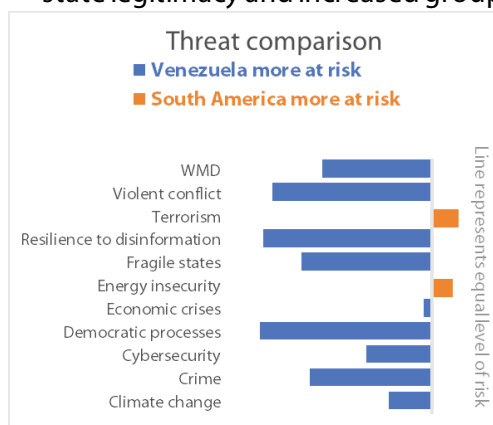
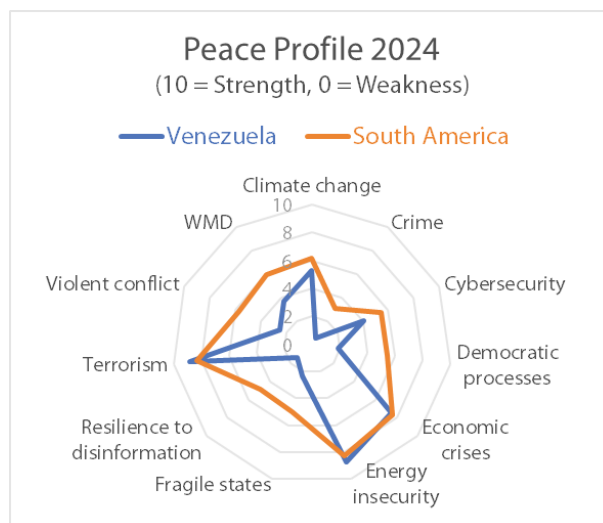
Venezuela ranks 125th on the Normandy Index and is considered more at risk than the South American average. It performs worse on every indicator except energy insecurity at regional level, with international sanctions exacerbating the situation in this domain.

Background and key issues

President Nicolás Maduro was re-elected in May 2018, in presidential elections contested due to irregularities. Legislative elections were held in December 2020, but [not recognised](#) by the EU and other international actors. As the constitution provides for presidential elections every six years, the country will therefore [vote](#) for a new president on 28 July 2024. Maduro is seeking re-election, however, doubts persist as to whether the elections will be free and fair in the eyes of the international community. Venezuelan authorities banned opposition candidate for the Unitary Platform, María Corina Machado, from holding office for 15 years, due to her support for former opposition leader Juan Guaidó. Due to Maduro officials' antidemocratic action violating the October 2023 Maduro-opposition electoral agreement, the [Biden Administration](#) rolled back most of the US sectoral sanctions relief.

New security and hybrid threats

From 2013 to 2022, Venezuela fell 63 places on the [Fragile States Index](#), largely as a result of falling state legitimacy and increased group grievances. Venezuela has one of the highest [homicide](#) rates globally. By end of March 2023, over 7 million Venezuelans were refugees or displaced migrants, with the vast majority – more than 6 million – hosted in Latin American and Caribbean countries. By May 2023, Colombia was home to the largest number of Venezuelans (over 2.5 million). Recently, [border disputes](#) with Guyana over the oil-rich Essequibo region have increased. Maduro used a non-binding referendum on Venezuelan sovereignty in Essequibo (approved by 95 % of voters) to whip up nationalist fervour. The Maduro regime has also [used](#) digital disinformation as a political strategy and continues to crack down on [journalists](#) and freedom of expression.



EU involvement

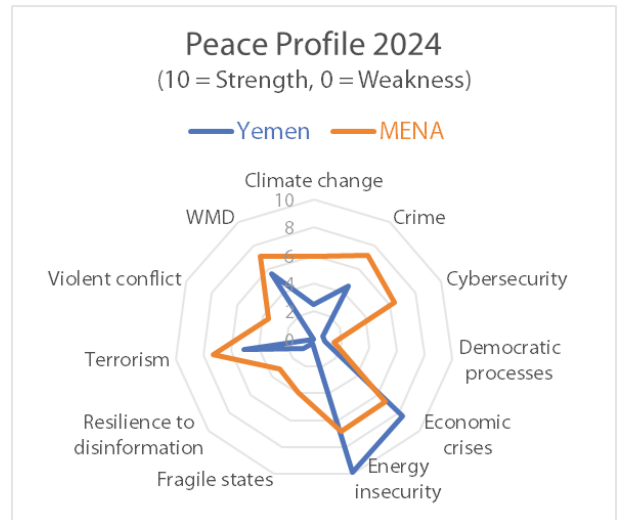
The EU supported the failed dialogue efforts between the government and the parliamentary majority, and reiterated the need for transparent [elections](#) in 2018, and again in 2020. It also imposed [targeted sanctions](#) and an embargo on arms and related material that could be used for internal repression. By the end of 2019, EU [assistance](#) totalled over €170 million. Venezuela has benefited from 10 [ICSP projects](#) (totaling more than €21 million). In 2020, the EU [promoted](#) an International Donors' Conference to help Venezuelan refugees and migrants, pledging an additional [€147 million](#) in 2021. It established an [International Contact Group on Venezuela](#), which is working to [facilitate conditions](#) for a [peaceful and democratic solution](#) to the Venezuelan crisis and the rapid delivery of [humanitarian aid](#). In March 2023, the European Commission released over €75 million in humanitarian aid, reaffirming its continued support for Venezuelans and to respond to their most urgent needs. The [2023 International Conference](#) in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants took place in Brussels in March 2023. On 21 January 2021, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the latest developments in the National Assembly of Venezuela. The EU deployed an EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to observe the November 2021 regional and local [elections](#).

Yemen

Yemen ranks 132nd on the Normandy Index, making it the fourth least peaceful country in the world. The conflict between the Saudi-backed government and Iran-backed Houthi forces that erupted in 2014 has killed hundreds of thousands, displaced millions and created severe food shortages. A truce negotiated in April 2022 continues to deliver beyond expectations, and the Saudi-backed Yemen government and the Houthis committed to steps toward a ceasefire in December 2023. However, tensions arising from the Israel-Hamas war threaten the peace talks, stability and the economy.

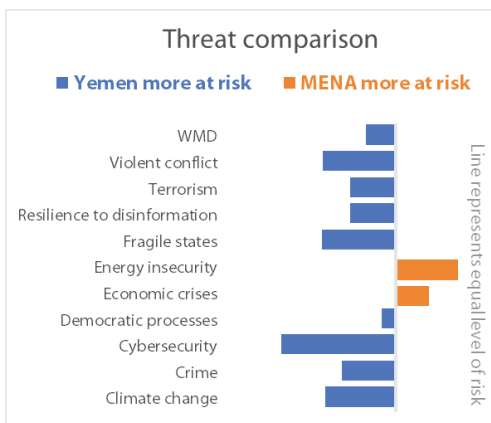
Background and key issues

Yemen has suffered [decades](#) of internal conflict, economic mismanagement and extreme weather conditions. A popular uprising in 2011 led authoritarian President Ali Abdullah Saleh to step down. Taking advantage of the ensuing period of [political instability](#), the Houthi movement, tied to the Shia Muslim minority and supported by Iran, took control of northern parts of the country in 2014, sparking a [civil war](#) with the Yemeni Government backed by Saudi Arabia. An [estimated](#) 151 000 people have since been killed and 4.5 million [displaced](#) as a direct result of the [conflict](#). Furthermore, over 226 200 people are believed to have died due to the indirect consequences of the war, including food shortages and a lack of health services. Yemen ranks 23rd on the [2024 Global Terrorism Index](#). Both al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and ISIL/Da'esh are active in Yemen.



New security and hybrid threats

In 2023, Yemen ranked second on the Fragile States Index, mainly due to the lack of central government control in large swathes of its northern and western territories, dominated by Houthi forces. With tensions rising as a result of the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, Houthi [strikes](#) against international Israel-connected or bound vessels in the Red Sea, and retaliatory US/UK strikes on Houthi military sites inside Yemen, [threaten](#) to derail fragile Saudi Arabia-Houthi negotiations aimed at a short-term ceasefire agreement. Nevertheless, [despite](#) the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, the peace talks continue, and in December 2023, the Saudi-backed Yemeni government and the Houthis both [committed](#)



to steps toward a ceasefire. The combined threats of a fragile state and violent conflict, including the ongoing Red Sea hostilities are [exacerbating](#) issues including food and health shortages. In 2024, [18.2 million](#) people are estimated to need humanitarian assistance, and 17.6 million people face food and nutrition insecurity, of whom [3.5 million](#) people are acutely malnourished. The country has a 97% cereal import [dependency ratio](#) and imports a third of its wheat from [Ukraine](#). Yemen ranks 12th worst on the [2023 Notre Dame Adaptability Index](#), a reflection of high vulnerability to climate change and low preparedness.

EU involvement

Since the beginning of the war in 2015, the EU has [contributed](#) almost €1.5 billion to respond to the crisis in Yemen. This includes €1 billion in humanitarian aid (with €125 million allocated in 2024 alone) and €487 million in development assistance. The EU humanitarian aid includes food assistance, healthcare, education, water, and shelter. It also includes improved hygiene services in areas of high food insecurity and malnutrition, conflict-affected areas, and for displaced populations.

5. ANNEX – The Normandy Index: Methodology

This annex explains the components and the methodology of the index developed by the Institute for Economics and Peace.

Normandy Index of the European Parliament – Methodology

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5.1. Background

Humanity is now facing challenges unparalleled in its history. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic caused an immediate global crisis globally and crystallised the interconnectivity of a globalised world. This is occurring against a backdrop of 'mega trends' caused by climate change, ever-decreasing biodiversity, depletion of the earth's fresh water, and overpopulation. The world is experiencing great socio-political uncertainty, with power dynamics amongst global superpowers shifting, traditional alliances breaking and a widespread crisis of democracy.

Such challenges, whether short or long term, call for global solutions and require cooperation on a scale unprecedented in human history. In a hyper-connected world, the sources of many of these challenges are multidimensional, increasingly complex and span national borders.

If not addressed, these challenges will increase the strain on resources, infrastructure and society, all of which can affect levels of peace within and between nations. The United Nations and World Bank 'Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict', released in 2018 recognised the interconnectivity of these challenges and called for risks to be considered multidimensional in nature ([World Bank & United Nations, 2018](#)).

To contribute to knowledge of the field, the European Parliament and the Region of Normandy produces the annual 'Normandy Index' (NI) since 2019. The purpose of the NI is to produce a measurement tool to afford an overview of different aspects of the threats facing the globe for policy makers and civil society. It aims to capture threats to peace and offer insights into the multidimensional risks countries face. Annual updates allow the tool to track how dynamics shift from year to year and assess positive and negative changes in risks.

The NI has three main aims:

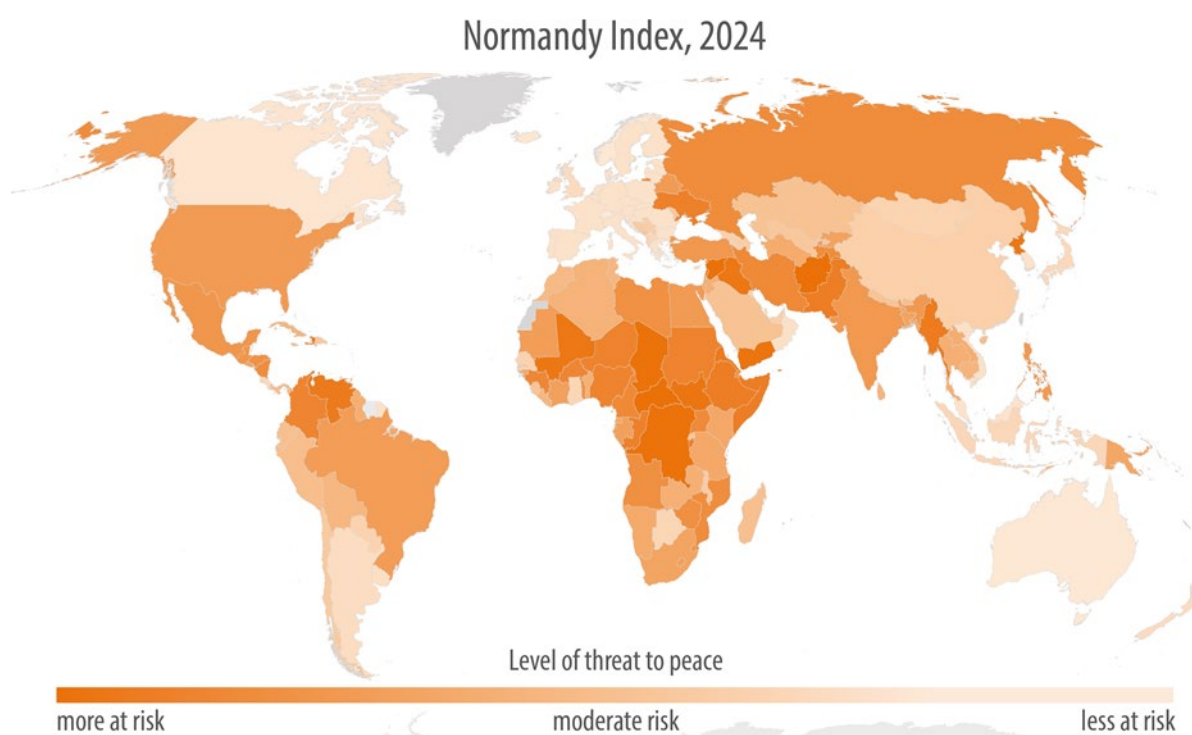
- assess the state of conflict and potential for conflict in each given country considering the current state and potential future state;
- provide a tool for measuring and monitoring trends across time;
- provide a mechanism to link the aforementioned categories of threats with an actual ranking of 'state and risk of conflict' that can be quantified and used for policy-making purposes.

Text Box 1 – The Normandy Index in context

The NI is intended to contribute to the field by identifying the different factors that the European Parliament believes pose threats to peace in the coming years. As such, the NI captures and conveys a unique angle on existing composite indices, such as the Institute for Economics and Peace's (IEP) Global Peace Index (GPI).

The GPI produced annually by IEP, ranks 163 independent states and territories according to their level of peace, as defined by the absence of violence and absence of fear of violence ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019a](#)). It is as such a measure of levels of *negative* peace today. IEP also explores the *positive* aspects of peace in its Positive Peace Index (PPI), which measures the levels within the 163 countries of the attitudes, institutions and structures that are known to create and sustain peaceful societies ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019b](#)).

Both the GPI and PPI are measuring levels of peace in the world *today*. The NI however is capturing *threats* to peace in the world today making it a useful contribution to the suite of tools used for quantitative analysis of peace and security.



The Normandy Index (NI) covers 138 countries and regions. The EU is considered one bloc and is given the average score of each country member.

5.2. Methodology Overview

In the EU Global Strategy 2016, the EU has prioritised a number of domains as being threats to peace in the coming years ([European Union, 2016](#)).

Each domain is in and of itself a complex system with multiple, interconnecting dimensions that are hard to quantify. Recognising this, the NI seeks to simplify many of these domain concepts by selecting one key representative indicator, rather than delving into the more complex and subjective exercise of selecting, weighting and aggregating multiple indicators for each domain. The indicators that were selected for each domain were done so based on current academic and policy literature, data availability, and in consultation with the European Parliament.

Table 1 presents the indicators selected to capture these domains.

TABLE 1 – NI Indicators

Domain	Indicators	Definition	Source	Number of Countries Covered	Latest Year of Data
Climate Change	INFORM Global Risk index	INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters.	United Nations	191	2024
Cybersecurity	Cybersecurity Index	The Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) is a survey measure capturing the commitment of Member States to cybersecurity in order to raise awareness. It is the only open source Cybersecurity Index that can be found.	International Telecommunication Union	194	2020
Democratic Processes	Participatory democracy index	A measure of the extent that the ideal of participatory democracy achieved within a country.	VDEM	179	2022
Economic Crises	Financial Vulnerability - Non-performing loans as % of total loans	Nonperforming loans to total gross loans ratio is calculated by using the value of nonperforming loans (NPLs) as the numerator and the total value of the loan portfolio as the denominator. It is often used as a proxy for asset quality.	World Bank	143	2022
	Central government debt, total (% of GDP)	Central government debt, total (% of GDP)	International Monetary Fund	135	2024
Energy Insecurity	Energy Imports	Energy imports, net (% of energy use). Banded to be 0 if country is a net exporter of energy.	World Bank, Enerdata	143	2022
	Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)	Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)	World Bank	142	2019
Fragile States	Fragile States Index	The Fragile States Index (FSI) is an annual ranking of 178 countries based on the different pressures they face that impact their levels of fragility. The Index is based on The Fund for Peace's proprietary Conflict Assessment System Tool (CAST) analytical approach. Based on comprehensive social science methodology, three primary streams of data — quantitative, qualitative, and expert validation — are triangulated and subjected to critical review to obtain final scores for the FSI.	Fund For Peace	179	2022
Crime	Homicide Rate per 100 000	Homicide Rate per 100 000 - used as a proxy for crime	UNODC	192	2021
	Perceptions of Criminality Banded	Responses to the Gallup Questions "Do you Feel Safe Walking Alone"	Gallup/IEP	163	2023
Resilience to Disinformation	Resilience to Disinformation	A measure of how often domestic and foreign Governments and Political Parties use social media and advertising to spread disinformation within the country.	VDEM	179	2022
Terrorism	Global Terrorism Index	A composite score in order to provide an ordinal ranking of countries on the impact of terrorism. The impact of terrorism includes incidents, deaths, injuries, and property damage caused by terrorism.	Institute for Economics and Peace	163	2024

Violent Conflict	Conflict sub-indicators of the Global Peace Index	Worst score of the following indicators from the Global Peace Index: (1) Intensity of Internal Conflict, (2) Deaths from Internal Conflict (3) Number of Internal conflicts, (4) Intensity of External Conflict, (5) Deaths from External Conflict	Institute Economics Peace	for and	163	2023
WMD	Nuclear Threat Index	The Nuclear Threat Index assesses countries' progress on nuclear security, highlights security gaps, and recommends actions for governments to better protect nuclear materials and facilities and build an effective global nuclear security architecture.	EIU		176	2023

The EU Global Strategy 2016 also discusses the importance of *hybrid threats* in coming years. Hybrid threats combine conventional and unconventional, military and non-military activities that can be used in a coordinated manner by state or non-state actors to achieve specific political objectives. They can range from cyberattacks on critical information systems, through to the disruption of critical services such as energy supplies or financial services, to the undermining of public trust in government institutions or the deepening of social divisions. Given the combined nature of hybrid threats, it is not possible to capture the risk posed to a country in any one measure. By capturing the potential components of hybrid threats in the NI domains, no separate 'hybrid threat' domain is calculated.

5.3. Detailed Domain and Indicator Descriptor

5.3.1. Domain 1 – Climate Change

Indicator: INFORM Global Risk index – Natural Disaster Risk Sub-indicator

Full Description: The INFORM Global Risk Index gives an annual per country score between zero and ten, where ten is “very high risk”.

Rationale: INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters, based on three dimensions of hazard & exposure, vulnerability and lack of coping capacity. It recognises climate change and the risks associated with it as having both natural and man-made components, and that the risk resulting from climate change is also dependent on how countries are able to cope with the effects of climate change.

Source: INFORM ([European Commission, 2019](#))

URL: <http://www.inform-index.org/>

5.3.2. Domain 2 - Cybersecurity

Indicator: Global Cybersecurity Index

Full Description: The Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) is a measure of the commitment of Member States of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to cybersecurity, assessed along five dimensions: legal measures; technical measures; organizational measures; capacity building; and, cooperation.

Rationale: The threat from cybersecurity can only be countered by a systemic and cross-sectoral regulatory approach grounded in technological capabilities. If a country is not currently taking active steps to protect financial and physical infrastructure, personal or government data, it leaves itself open to attacks. Examining the action and measures a country takes to try and minimize threats from cyber-attacks, via this GCI, is a viable, open source quantified measure of future threat.

Source: ITU ([International Telecommunication Union, 2017](#))

URL: <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/global-cybersecurity-index.aspx>

5.3.3. Domain 3 – Democratic Processes

Indicator: Participatory democracy Index

Full Description: The Varieties of Democracy (VDEM) database is a set of country level indicators of political or governmental organization; a society or institution with an organized government; the state; and the body politic.

The Participatory Democracy Index used in the NI is a measure of the extent to which the ideal of participatory democracy achieved within a country.

Rationale: Democratic processes are widely recognised as contributing to peace. Well-functioning democracies themselves have institutions to deal with societal grievances in a non-violent way. It is also believed democracies are less like to engage in armed conflict with other democracies. Democratic countries on average have the highest levels of peace globally in the Global Peace Index ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019a](#)). Furthermore, with the exception of relatively infrequent 'black swan' political or conflict events, a country's current democratic status tends to be a good predictor of future democratic status.

Source: Varieties of Democracy (VDEM) ([University of Gothenburg, 2020](#))

URL: <https://www.v-dem.net/>

5.3.4. Domain 4 – Economic Crises

Indicator: Financial Vulnerability- Non-performing loans as % of total loans

Full Description: Nonperforming loans to total gross loans ratio is calculated by using the value of nonperforming loans (NPLs) as the numerator and the total value of the loan portfolio as the denominator. It is often used as a proxy for asset quality.

Rationale: Non-performing loans are a good predictor of financial crises, with broader social consequences. Most immediately, high levels of debt may affect the state's ability to provide basic public services, which in turn is a key source of legitimacy for a government. Excess borrowing, particularly external debt, means increased exposure to global market risks, and creditor decisions, both of which can make a state vulnerable to external economic shocks ([Weltwirtschaftsforum & Zurich Insurance Group, 2019](#)). Unsustainable borrowing and debt may exacerbate underlying societal cleavages, particularly if real or perceived inequalities grow.

Source: World Bank ([World Bank, 2020, Trading Economics, 2021](#))

URL: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FB.AST.NPER.ZS>

Indicator: General government net debt (% GDP)

Full Description: General government net debt to GDP ratio is calculated by using the value of General government net debt as the numerator and the total GDP as the denominator.

Rationale: Sovereign debt crisis have been found to be correlated with civil unrest (Reinhart, 2010), and some have argued that sovereign debt crisis followed by extreme austerity measures were a contributing factor to the outbreak of World War II in Germany, and genocide in Rwanda ([Goldmann, 2012](#)).

Source: International Monetary Fund

URL: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/weo-database/2022/April>

5.3.5. Domain 5 – Energy Insecurity

Indicator: Energy Imports

Full Description: Energy imports, net (% of energy use).

Rationale: Energy independence, that is self-reliance on domestic sources of energy including oil, natural gas, other minerals as well as clean energy sources, has been a defining component of energy security since at least the oil price crisis of October 1973 ([Cohen et al., 2011](#)). Although it is but one aspect of energy security, along with measures such as source diversity and distance to consumption, it is a measure for which open source, comparable data exists at a global scale, and is hence minimally sufficient to capture the conceptual threat of energy insecurity.

IEP has supplemented the World Bank data with more recent data obtained from the Global Energy Statistical Yearbook 2020. This covers 60 countries up to 2019.

Source: World Bank ([World Bank, 2020, Enerdata, 2021](#))

URL: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/eg.imp.cons.zs>

<https://yearbook.enerdata.net/>

Indicator: Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)

Full Description: Electric power consumption (kWh per capita)

Rationale: Countries that consume more energy and have high dependence on imports will be more fragile than countries with a different profile.

Source: World Bank ([World Bank, 2022](#))

URL: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.USE.ELEC.KH.PC>

5.3.6. Domain 6 – Fragile States

Indicator: Fragile States Index

Full Description: A score between 0 and 120, where 120 is the highest level of fragility. Each country is scored annually based on 12 conflict risk indicators grouped into four dimensions: cohesion, economic, political and social.

Rationale: The Fragile States Index is based on a conflict assessment framework – known as 'CAST' – that was developed by FFP nearly a quarter-century ago for assessing the vulnerability of states to collapse. The CAST framework was designed to measure this vulnerability in pre-conflict, active conflict and post-conflict situations, and continues to be used widely by policy-makers, field practitioners, and local community networks. The methodology uses both qualitative and quantitative indicators, relies on public source data, and produces quantifiable results.

Source: Fund for Peace ([The Fund For Peace, 2020](#))

URL: <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/>

5.3.7. Domain 7 – Criminality/Homicide

Indicator: Homicide rate

Full Description: Country Homicide rate per 100 000 population

Rationale: High homicide rates are associated with high risks to security of persons within a country and reflects a diminished capacity of government to perform its duties to protect people within its borders.

The EU Global Strategy highlights trans-border crime as a significant potential threat to peace in the world. Transnational organised crime, by its very nature, affects all countries. The nature of trans-border crimes vary greatly, from Class A drug smuggling to human trafficking. Crime recording varies from country to country, and so there is no one database that captures interdictions of trans-border crimes. While UNODC publish a 'transnational organized crime threat assessment', these are meant to be applied at the local level and do not provide a platform to be able to create a globally comparative ranking of countries.²² Further complicating the issue is that the factors which enable

²² (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2010)

trans-border crime also enable all other types of economic activity: communications, trade, interconnectedness, globalisation and new technologies.

In the absence of a relative country measure for transnational/transborder crime, the NI uses a country's homicide rate per 100 000 as a proxy for levels of crime. While this is a crude measure, the link between homicide and organised crime is widely explored,²³ it has been used in the literature as an indicator of organised crime in a country.²⁴

Source: UNODC ([United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2020](#))

URL: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html>

Indicator: Perceptions of Criminality

Full Description: Responses to the Gallup World Poll Question: "Do you Feel Safe Walking Alone?"

Rationale: Perceptions of Criminality in a society affect citizens' sense of security and identity with broader implications to businesses, security spending and security policies. Perceptions of high levels of criminality can have a destabilising effect on the social contract between a Government and its population. The Institute for Economics and Peace has found that the cost of violence containment, which is influenced by perceived threats, costs around US\$1 800 per person per year ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019](#)).

Source: IEP ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019](#))

URL: <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/reports/>

A final country score is calculated by a weighted sum of 0.75 Homicide Rate + 0.25 Perceptions of Criminality.

5.3.8. Domain 8 – Resilience to Disinformation

Indicator: Resilience to Disinformation

Full Description: The Varieties of Democracy (VDEM) database has four indicators of the presence of disinformation:

- Government dissemination of false information domestic: How often do the government and its agents use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence its own population?
- Party dissemination of false information domestic: How often do major political parties and candidates for office use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence their own population?
- Foreign governments dissemination of false information: How routinely do foreign governments and their agents use social media to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence domestic politics in this country?
- Foreign governments ads: How routinely do foreign governments and their agents use paid advertisements on social media in order to disseminate misleading viewpoints or false information to influence domestic politics in this country?

²³ (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2011)

²⁴ (Alberto Alesina, 2019)

Each country is ranked on a Likert scale of (0) Extremely often to (4) Never, or almost never. The Resilience to Disinformation indicator used in the NI is the country average of each of these four indicators.

Rationale: There is a growing concern over the ability of both state and non-state actors to not only restrict the free flow of information, but also to actively interfere in the functioning of civil society through the use of disinformation campaigns. Research into resilience to disinformation is a relatively new field of quantification with a number of emerging sources in recent years ([Eurasian States in Transition Research Center, 2018](#); [Global Disinformation Index, 2020](#)). The NI will continually monitor the literature to build on these measures in forthcoming releases.

Source: Varieties of Democracy (VDEM) ([University of Gothenburg, 2020](#))

URL: <https://www.v-dem.net/>

5.3.9. Domain 9 – Terrorism

Indicator: Global Terrorism Index Score

Full Description: A composite score that provides an ordinal ranking of countries on the impact of terrorism. The impact of terrorism includes incidents, deaths, injuries, and hostages caused by terrorism

Rationale: This is a core indicator of the multidimensional impact of terrorism on a country. This is the most reliable and consistent data source, available across more than 163 countries and updated on an annual basis, starting in 2007.

Source: IEP ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2023](#))

URL: <http://www.visionofhumanity.org>

5.3.10. Domain 10 – Violent Conflicts

Indicator: Violent Conflict

Full Description: A composite indicator of the number, intensity and fatalities of both internal and external violent conflicts.

Rationale: The Institute for Economics and Peace in its annual Global Peace Index measures the following four indicators relating to violent conflict:

Number and Duration of Internal Conflicts

This indicator measures the number and duration of conflicts that occur within a specific country's legal boundaries. Information for this indicator is sourced from three datasets from

Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP): the Battle-Related Deaths Dataset, Non-State Conflict Dataset and One-sided Violence Dataset.

Number of Deaths from Organised Internal Conflict

This indicator uses the UCDP's definition of conflict. UCDP defines conflict as: 'a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related

deaths in a year.' Statistics are compiled from the most recent edition of the IISS ACD, which has the following definition of armed conflict-related fatalities: 'Fatality statistics relate to military and civilian lives lost as a direct result of an armed conflict'.

Number, Duration and Role in External Conflicts

This indicator measures the number and duration of extraterritorial conflicts a country is involved in. Information for this indicator is sourced from the UCDP Battle-Related Deaths Dataset. The score for a country is determined by adding all individual conflict scores where that country is involved as an actor in a conflict outside its legal boundaries. Conflicts are not counted against a country if they have already been counted against that country in the number and duration of internal conflicts indicator.

Number of Deaths from Organised External Conflict

This indicator uses the UCDP's definition of conflict as 'a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in a year'. When no data were provided, several alternative sources have been used: International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Armed Conflict Database; the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, and the EIU.

Each of these are scored out of 1-5. The NI uses a country's worst score across all of these indicators for the Violent Conflict domain.

Source: IEP ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019a](#))

URL: <http://www.visionofhumanity.org>

5.3.11. Domain 11 – Weapons of Mass Destruction

Indicator: Nuclear and Heavy Weapons Capabilities Indicator

Full Description: The Global Peace Index Nuclear and Heavy Weapons Capabilities Score (**HWC**): a categorised system for rating the destructive capability of a country's stock of heavy weapons. Holdings are those of government forces and do not include holdings of armed opposition groups. Heavy weapons numbers were determined using a combination of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Countries are given a score of 1 for low military capabilities. Nuclear countries are scored 5.

Rationale: This indicator is a categorised system for rating the destructive capability of a country's stock of heavy weapons.

Source: IEP ([Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019a](#))

URL: <http://www.visionofhumanity.org>

Indicator: Nuclear Threat Index

Full Description: The Nuclear Threat Index assesses countries' progress on nuclear security, highlights security gaps, and recommends actions for governments to better protect nuclear materials and facilities and build an effective global nuclear security architecture.

Normandy Index Score is calculated by the minimum country score in the following three indicators:

- Nuclear Threat 1: Scores for 22 countries with 1kg or more of weapons-useable nuclear materials
- Nuclear Threat 2: Scores for 153 countries and Taiwan with <1kg of weapons-useable nuclear materials
- Nuclear Sabotage: 46 countries and Taiwan with nuclear facilities including power plants and research reactors with a capacity >2MW

In addition, to capture potential fallout or tensions posed by a country by the Nuclear Threat of neighbouring or regional countries, the NI calculates a country score incorporates the average regional score.

A final country score is calculated by a weighted sum of 0.75 Country Score + 0.25 Regional Score.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

URL: <https://www.ntiindex.org/>

5.3.12. Data Availability and Imputation

The methodology developed has been designed to be in line with other prominent global indicators, and substantial effort has been made to populate the index with the best existing country information. However, the major challenge to developing a harmonized composite index is in attempting to overcome the paucity of consistent and comprehensive data across very diverse countries around the world. They vary significantly not just in terms of demographic and geographic characteristics, but also in terms of socio-economic characteristics which often times can impact data collection and quality.

The issue of data gaps is a common challenge to creating an index. The OECD recommend a number of statistical techniques for dealing with data imputation to fill in data gaps ([OECD et al., 2008](#)). Table 2 lists the approaches used in the NI. Using the combination of these techniques, the NI represents the use of the best possible data without an overly complex methodology.

TABLE 2: Data Imputation methods

Method	Description	Application in NI
Cold Deck Imputation	Replacing the missing value with a value from another source.	The NI uses this either when it uses the most recent data point in a series as the current data point, or uses additional country statistics to fill in gaps.
Hot Deck Imputation	Replacing the missing value with a regional average.	The NI uses hot deck imputation for data that is not available for all countries.

5.4. Weighting the Indicators

As the EU Global Strategy 2018 does not rank domains in order of priority, the NI uses **an equal weight of 1** across all domains, simplifying the calculation of the final NI score.

The only NI domain with more than one indicator is that of *Crime* which includes *Intentional homicides (per 100 000 people)* and *Perceptions of Criminality Banded* which are weighted at 0.75 and 0.25 respectively.

5.5. Domain Calculations

This section illustrates how each indicator, and hence each domain is treated. The Domain process is in two stages 1) data collection and 2) imputation and banding.

Banding data in the case of the NI is a way of dealing with comparing otherwise incongruous information. It takes each indicator and scales them to a score between 0 and 1 relative to the whole data set. To do this, appropriate minimum and maximum values for the data set are decided such that anything below the minimum is assigned zero, and anything above the maximum is assigned 1, and everything else is scaled evenly between the two. Therefore, in year y , after data imputation, the banded score is calculated for indicator i by Equation 1.

Equation 1: Banding Equation

$$\text{Banded}_i = \frac{\text{Country Indicator Value in Year } y_i - \text{minimum cut of } f_i}{\text{maximum cut of } f_i - \text{minimum cut of } f_i}$$

Banding this way indicates the implicit assumption that higher levels of the indicator are better. However, higher levels of some indicators, such as the Global Terrorism Index score, represent a less desirable case for countries. In such cases, the banded score is reverse and is calculated by Equation 2.

Equation 2: Reverse banding equation

$$\text{Reverse Banded}_i = 1 - \frac{\text{Country Indicator Value in Year } y_i - \text{minimum cut of } f_i}{\text{maximum cut of } f_i - \text{minimum cut of } f_i}$$

The banded indicator score for each country is then the domain score, as each domain is measured by only one indicator. Each domain score lies between zero and one.

An integral part of this process is to set appropriate minimum and maximum cut off values for the banded scores. There are empirical and normative methods available for doing this. While some data may be distributed normally and therefore lend itself well to standard and well defined mathematical techniques such as defining outliers as those greater than three standard deviations from the mean, other data sets do not follow well behaved trends. The final choice of which technique is used must depend on a number of considerations: the nature of the data, the underlying distribution, the purpose of the index, what information is being conveyed, etc. Upon investigation of the global datasets used in the YDI, very few of the distributions can be classified as normal. The presence of outliers affects not only the average, but the variance, skewing both the min and max.

To account for this, IEP in some instances set artificial minimums and maximums to ensure results are not too heavily influenced by outliers. In the cases where outliers are present, the lower bound set for the banding process are set as the lowest data point that is within 1.5 times the interquartile range below the first quartile (where the interquartile range is defined as the distance between the first and third quartiles). Similarly the upper bound set for the banding process are set as the largest data point that is within 1.5 times the interquartile range above the third quartile.

5.6. Aggregating Domain Scores to Final NI Score

Since each domain is weighted equally in terms of threat significance, the final aggregated NI score can be calculated as the average of the eleven domain scores. Thus the final NI score is a value between zero and ten for each country in each year.

$$NI\ Score = 11 \times \frac{\sum_{i=D1}^{D11} \text{Country Indicator Banded Score}_i}{11}$$

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Conflict is rarely confined to the geographical space in which wars take place. The increasingly global effects – human, material and political – of wars and conflicts make a view of the level of threats to peace, security and democracy around the world more important than ever. The 'Normandy Index' has presented an annual measurement of these threats since the 2019 Normandy Peace Forum. The results of the 2024 exercise suggest the level of threats to peace is the highest since the Index began, confirming declining trends in global security resulting from conflict, geopolitical rivalry, growing militarisation and hybrid threats. The findings of the 2024 exercise draw on data compiled in 2023-2024 to compare peace – defined on the basis of a given country's performance against a range of predetermined threats – across countries and regions. A series of 63 individual country case studies complete the picture of the state of peace today. Designed and prepared by the European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS), in conjunction with and on the basis of data provided by the Institute for Economics and Peace, the Normandy Index is produced in partnership with the Region of Normandy.

The paper forms part of the EPRS contribution to the 2024 Normandy World Peace Forum.

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