POLITECNICO DI TORINO
Repository ISTITUZIONALE

Just Territorial Resilience: Disentangling EU Policy Narratives between Geopolitical Stability and Spatial Justice

Original
Just Territorial Resilience: Disentangling EU Policy Narratives between Geopolitical Stability and Spatial Justice / Mohabat Doost, D., Brunetta, G.. - In: EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT. - ISSN 1650-9544. - ELETTRONICO. - 23:3(2026), pp. 67-92. [10.5281/zenodo.20340705]

Availability:
This version is available at: 11583/3011290 since: 2026-05-22T13:24:22Z

Publisher:
Politecnico di Torino

Published
DOI:10.5281/zenodo.20340705

Terms of use:

This article is made available under terms and conditions as specified in the corresponding bibliographic description in the repository

Publisher copyright

(Article begins on next page)

19 November 2026

EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT

Research article

SPECIAL ISSUE: The Wicked Problems in the Governance of the Just Green Transitions: between Territorial Resilience and Foresight

Just Territorial Resilience: Disentangling EU Policy Narratives between Geopolitical Stability and Spatial Justice

Abstract

Resilience has progressively evolved into a central principle of European Union (EU) policymaking, reflecting the EU's response to multiple crises, from financial instability to climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper analyses how resilience is framed across key EU strategic documents, including European Union Global Strategy (2016), European Green Deal (2019), Strategic Foresight Report (2020), Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020), Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021), and EU Cohesion Policy 2021–2027 (2021). Using inductive content analysis combined with a set of guiding questions, the paper identifies different framings of resilience, from a geopolitical stability narrative to a multidimensional governance paradigm. The results further reveal that, despite this evolution, resilience remains conceptually fragmented across EU policy, with territorial and place-based dimensions underrepresented and the uneven vulnerabilities of communities insufficiently acknowledged. The paper argues that embedding resilience in territorial logic is essential to ensure that policies address differentiated regional capacities and vulnerabilities, advancing both cohesion and spatial justice through redistributive financial mechanisms and participatory governance structures that give voice to the most vulnerable territories in the design and implementation of EU resilience strategies.

Keywords
Territorial resilience, EU policy, governance, Just Green Transition, Spatial justice

Introduction

Resilience is rapidly becoming a cross-cutting priority in strategic policymaking, amid multiple contemporary global challenges such as the 2008 financial and economic crisis, impacts of rapid urbanisation, the increasing vulnerability of human settlements, the growing

Authors:
Danial Mohabat Doost (*corresponding author*), Responsible Risk Resilience Centre (R3C), University Sustainability, Research Infrastructures and Laboratories (SAIL), Politecnico di Torino, Italy, danial.mohabat@polito.it, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5536-1952

Grazia Brunetta, Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning (DIST), Responsible Risk Resilience Centre (R3C), Politecnico di Torino, Italy, grazia.brunetta@polito.it, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1868-2700

evidence of the profound impacts of climate change, and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. A simple search performed by the authors on the Scopus database indicates that, until 1995, the number of academic articles containing the term resilience in their title, keywords, or abstract barely reached 200 per year. By 2025, this number had risen to nearly 60,000 publications annually, and the trend indicates a continued rapid growth in the coming years. The Scopus database also shows that the growing body of literature on resilience spans a wide range of academic disciplines, from engineering and environmental science to energy, psychology, and even computer science.

This diversity of application domains clearly indicates that the definition of the term resilience can vary significantly across scientific fields. C. S. Holling (1996), a foundational figure in resilience theory, distinguishes between two dominant definitions of resilience. The first called *engineering resilience*, originally was adopted by physical scientists who Holling believes were among the earliest to use the term. Engineering resilience refers to "stability near an equilibrium steady state", where resilience is measured by a system's resistance to disturbance and the speed at which it returns to equilibrium. The second definition called *ecological resilience*, introduces the idea of multiple "equilibrium steady state", or "stability domains" (C. S. Holling, 1973; B. H. Walker et al., 1981), and defines resilience as the capacity to absorb disturbances and avoid structural changes. Therefore, while *engineering resilience* assumes one globally stable equilibrium (single stability domain), *ecological resilience* recognises multiple equilibria and possible regime shifts between alternative stable states. *Engineering resilience* is measured by resistance and *ecological resilience* by absorptive capacity. In terms of the objectives, *engineering resilience* aims to optimise efficiency and maintain constant functioning, while *ecological resilience* would maintain diversity, flexibility, and learning capacity to cope with surprise and uncertainty (Brunetta et al., 2019; Davoudi et al., 2012; Pelling, 2010; B. Walker et al., 2004).

Although the distinction between *engineering* and *ecological resilience* has significantly advanced the resilience discourse, when the concept enters the social realm, neither of these two conceptions can fully capture the complexity of societies marked by power relations, contestation, and struggles over redistribution of resources and participation in decision making processes. This can be better understood in light of MacKinnon and Derickson's (2013) observation that "ecological resilience refers to external disturbances and shocks" not to the internal dynamics within societies that generate political and social change. This narrow focus is problematic because many contemporary transformations -such as green, ecological, or just transitions- are not sudden shocks but intentional, planned, and often contested processes. Resilience should not be understood solely as a response to external shocks; it must also

account for the fact that, within societies, many changes and transitions are deliberate and often planned. Such transformations, whether in their processes or outcomes, inevitably lead to winners and losers, and the degree to which different groups are vulnerable to the unintended/tolerated negative consequences of these transitions varies greatly. This understanding directly applies to policies like The European Green Deal (2019) and the green and just transition (European Commission, 2020b), as it underscores that socio-ecological transformations -such as decarbonisation or climate adaptation- are not neutral processes, but involve distributive and procedural dimensions of justice that determine who bears the costs and who benefits from the transition.

In this context, the academic debate addressed the limitations of engineering and ecological resilience when applied in social realm, by developing broader interpretations of the concept. Within this trajectory, *evolutionary resilience* has been advanced especially by Davoudi et al. (2012, 2013), who reinterprets resilience as an open-ended process of dynamic reconfiguration rather than a return to equilibrium. Given the ever-evolving nature of cities and societies, the transformative capacity becomes central which highlights that resilience may require structural change, political contestation, and the creation of new development pathways rather than the preservation of status quo. Among these strands, *territorial resilience* (Brunetta et al., 2019) offers a particularly relevant conceptual advancement by explicitly applying these insights to territories understood as multidimensional and multi-scalar systems. *Territorial resilience* does not refer only to resistance or recovery from disturbance, but to the capacity of territories to absorb, adapt, and transform through the interaction of socio-economic, socio-cultural, socio-ecological, spatial, infrastructural, and governance dimensions.[1]

In addition, the growing academic and policy attention to *territorial resilience* must be understood in the context of a broader conceptual shift within EU policy, from territorial cohesion to territorial resilience. Territorial cohesion has long been a foundational but contested concept, understood as a multidimensional process promoting balanced territorial development through economic competitiveness, social cohesion, environmental sustainability, and governance (Medeiros et al., 2024). However, as Demeterova et al. (2020) demonstrate, it has remained a 'fuzzy concept', struggling to translate its normative ambitions into consistent territorial practice. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this evolution, exposing the limits of cohesion frameworks and prompting a turn towards resilience as a more dynamic and crisis-responsive principle (Bourdin et al., 2024). This shift is clearly visible in the context of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, which has embedded resilience under Heading 2 of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

[1] For detailed elaboration of territorial resilience as a place-based and multi-scalar concept, see also the final report of the ESPON TERRES project (Jaska et al., 2025).

–Cohesion, Resilience, and Values– its largest budgetary allocation. The ongoing post-2027 debate further sharpens this tension: the European Commission's proposed 2028-2034 MFF moves towards centralised, performance-based delivery modelled on RRF, whereas the European Committee of the Regions and EU Ministers responsible for spatial planning have called for maintaining the place-based, partnership-driven approach that keeps territorial diversity and regional disparities at the centre of EU investment logic (European Committee of the Regions, 2025). Therefore, critically examining how resilience is currently framed across key EU policy documents becomes not only analytically important, but also politically relevant. Clarifying the concept's evolution in the EU policy, helps reveal what kind of resilience it is promoting and whether the institutionalised conception is aimed at maintaining stability, or at enabling transformation and justice. In particular, critical scholars have increasingly questioned whether resilience, as deployed in policy discourse, risks becoming a depoliticising and potentially neoliberal concept. Davoudi (2018) argues that resilience is not inherently just since systems can be resilient while perpetuating deeply unjust outcomes, as resilience rhetoric tends to naturalise crises by treating them as external shocks rather than outcomes of structural political and economic choices, thereby obscuring the root causes of vulnerability.

In the European Union (EU) policy, resilience was first mentioned by the development community in Brussels (Juncos, 2017), following similar trends in the UN system, the OECD (2009) and other EU member states (e.g., Cabinet Office, 2011), where the concept was predominantly framed around state-building, institutional capacity, and emergency preparedness rather than as a broad societal or territorial principle. According to Tocci (2020) following to these trends, what first made resilience an important discussion in the European Union's policy discourse was the adoption of the EU Global Strategy - EUGS (European External Action Service, 2016). EUGS serves as the strategic framework guiding the EU's foreign and security policy which has replaced the 2003 European Security Strategy (Council of the European Union: General Secretariat of the Council, 2009). Its values of resilience are defined in the context of geopolitical challenges, security, strategic autonomy and stability of the European Union. Figure 1 shows a word cloud of the most emerging terms used in the document highlighting the central themes of the text including security, global concerns, defence, conflicts, and the role of states.

Figure 1: Word cloud of the 30 most frequent terms in the EUGS, including "resilience"; generated by the authors using NVivo Release 1.7.2.

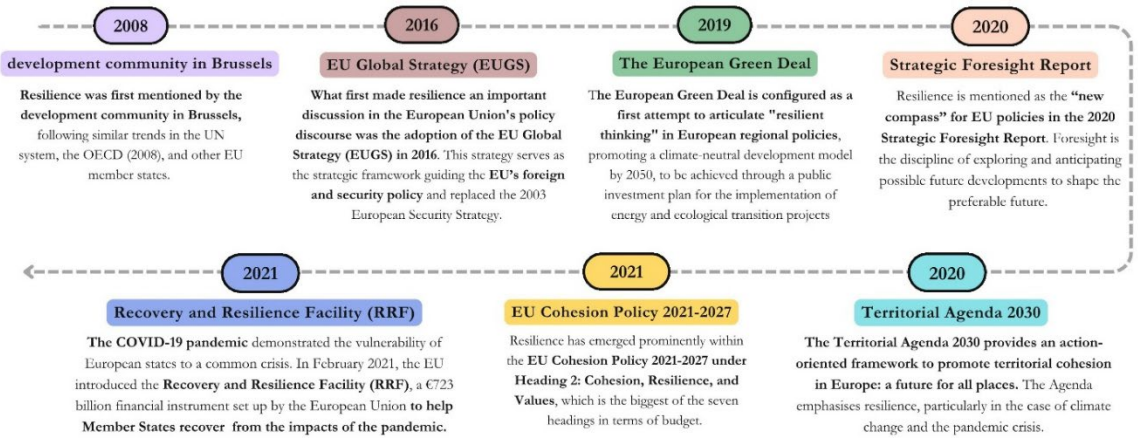


The focus of resilience in EUGS is on fostering stability, security, and sustainable development in regions to the east (including Central Asia) and south (including Central Africa) of the European Union. Hence, the early uses of the term resilience in EU policy were primarily in the context of foreign and security policy. EUGS mentions that "it is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies to the east stretching into Central Asia, and south down to Central Africa. Fragility beyond our borders threatens all our vital interests. By contrast, resilience –the ability of states and societies to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises– benefits us". In other words, EUGS turned resilience into one of the pillars of EU foreign and security policy (Bosse & Vieira, 2023).

Later, the concept became integrated into various other EU policies, covering economic, environmental, and social aspects. European Green Deal (2019) incorporates resilience into its climate-neutral development model. The Strategic Foresight Report (European Commission, 2020a), mentions resilience as a new compass for EU policies considering four dimensions: social and economic, geopolitical, green, and digital. The territorial Agenda 2030 (Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development of the EU and EFTA Countries, 2020), further emphasis the concept by incorporating the place-based nature of it and the importance of considering context specific vulnerabilities and capacities of European regions. What made resilience more prominent than ever in the EU policy was the COVID-19 pandemic, which demonstrated the vulnerability of European states to a shared transboundary crisis. As a direct policy response, in February 2021, the EU introduced the Recovery and Resilience Facility-RRF (European Commission, 2021), a €723 billion financial instrument set up by the European

Union to help Member States recover from the economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. RRF is the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU (European Commission, 2020b), the EU's plan to become stronger and more resilient after the pandemic crisis. Finally, resilience has emerged prominently within the EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2021) under Heading 2: Cohesion, Resilience, and Values, which is the largest of the seven headings in terms of budget. Taken together, these successive manifestations show that, from 2016 onwards, resilience has rapidly entered into the EU policy and has appeared more frequently in official documents showing differences in meaning and aims (Figure 2). Building on this background, this paper aims to clarify how the EU's understanding and framing of resilience have evolved over time, reflecting broader shifts in its policy priorities.

Figure 2: The conceptual evolution of resilience in EU policy: Key documents and turning points (2008–2021); Graphic created by the authors using Canva



Methodology

This paper employs a qualitative inductive content analysis to investigate how the concept of resilience is addressed across the strategic European policy documents, to find central themes directly from the texts without relying on predefined assumptions. In addition, a word frequency analysis is conducted to identify the most emergent terms and concepts associated with resilience across the selected documents. This helps both to guarantee qualitative depth and to provide quantitative support for the analysis.

The documents are selected following the review of the relevant literature that enables the identification of those that explicitly incorporate resilience as an important element of their framework. The following criteria are considered for the selection of documents: authorship by European institutions or affiliated bodies; strategic or guiding policy status, excluding sectoral or domain-specific strategies; thematic relevance to resilience; structural prominence of resilience

in the document's core objectives and defining statements; and availability in full-text format. The selected documents are EU Global Strategy-EUGS (2016), European Green Deal (2019), Strategic Forsight Report (2020), Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020), Recovery and Resilience Facility -RRF (2021), and EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 (2021). Other EU policies, such as the Climate Adaptation Strategy (2021) or sectoral strategies on energy, biodiversity, or health, also refer to resilience and provide useful insights. However, these documents are domain-specific by their objective, meaning that resilience within them is necessarily subordinated to a single sectoral logic –such as climate, energy, or health– rather than being articulated as a broad governance principle. By contrast, the selected corpus consists exclusively of cross-sectoral strategic documents that define and steer the EU's overall orientation towards resilience across multiple policy domains simultaneously. This makes them analytically more consistent for examining how resilience is framed as a governance concept at EU level, rather than how it is applied within any specific sector.

A primary lexical search is performed to locate all occurrences of the term ‘resilience’ and its variations (like resilience, resilient, resiliency). Regarding the derivation of semantic framing codes, the coding process was conducted manually, supported by repeated readings of the material to ensure consistency in interpretation and to refine the coding scheme iteratively. Each sentence was read in full context and assigned to a thematic category based on its dominant dimension of resilience. Coding proceeded inductively and categories were not fixed in advance but refined progressively as new material was read and earlier codes were revisited accordingly. Sentences whose meaning was ambiguous or thematically overlapping were not forced into existing categories but retained in an ‘unclassified’ group, which itself serves as a transparency device reflecting the inherent complexity of policy language. To further strengthen the validity of the coding scheme, thematic categories were discussed and refined among the authors, ensuring that the assignment of sentences to categories reflected a shared interpretive judgement. Following the individual coding of each document, all codes were reviewed together to ensure terminological and conceptual consistency across documents before proceeding to the meta-thematic clustering.

Subsequently, since multiple documents are analysed, a cross-document comparison of emerging themes across documents is performed. In particular, a meta-synthesis is conducted to enable a comparative analysis. While the initial coding remained inductive and document-specific, all of them are subsequently reviewed to detect conceptual overlaps and semantic closeness leading to clustering of similar themes such as *governance and state-building* and *institutional resilience* into broader meta-thematic categories like *Governance and Institutions*.

This process enables the construction of a unified comparative table, where document-specific framings of resilience could be meaningfully contrasted.

The last methodological step aims to clarify how each of these policies define resilience, and how these definitions differ from each other. This is reached by posing some fundamental questions, inspired from Meerow et al., (2016) who asks to consider answering key questions to provide a definition of resilience in each context: resilience for whom, what, when, where, and why? This suggestion is adopted and elaborated in this research by the authors based on our objectives. The six guiding questions proposed here are original elaborations developed by the authors, explicitly designed for a territorial and EU policy analysis context. More precisely, Meerow et al. (2016) developed their framework specifically for defining urban resilience, focusing on city systems and urban governance, whereas the questions proposed here extend the spatial scope to multi-scalar territorial systems encompassing regions, inner peripheries, cross-border areas, and rural territories. In addition, unlike Meerow et al. (2016), whose objective was to clarify what an appropriate definition of resilience can look like, this paper aims to extract and contextualise the implicit definitions embedded in the selected policy documents and to assess whether they differ significantly across policy contexts.

More specifically, answering each of these questions allows us to interpret how a policy document frames resilience, even when the term is not explicitly defined. On this basis, we propose a meta-definition of resilience as "*the capacity of a subject to respond to or deal with a sort of change by mobilising certain forms of capital or resources, within a specific spatial and temporal context, and oriented towards a particular objective*". The goal is to lead from this meta-definition to a contextual definition based on each policy document. The set of guiding questions together with the example responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience, developed by the authors, drawing on the analytical logic of Meerow et al. (2016)

Key contextualising question	Responses from the Policy document
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	(e.g., an individual, a city, a community, a health system, a supply chain, an ecosystem)
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	(e.g., climate change, pandemic, economic shock, geopolitical conflict, technological disruption, war)
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capitals or assets can be mobilised?	(e.g., social capital, financial resources, institutional capacity, governance, knowledge)
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	(e.g., EU, states, regions, or rural vs. urban, local vs. transboundary, coastal vs. mountainous areas)
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	(e.g., during a shock, in recovery, over the long-term, during planned transitions, across generations)
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	(e.g., stability, adaptation, transformation, justice, growth, green transition)

It is important to note that the proposed guiding questions serve as the primary framework for contextualising the definition of resilience across selected policies. However, beneath each of these core questions lie additional, more specific sub-questions that are essential for addressing broader normative concerns, particularly those related to equity and justice in resilience-building processes. For instance, under Question 1 (Who or what is expected to be resilient?), it becomes crucial to ask: Whose resilience is being prioritised, and whose is neglected? Similarly, Question 3 (What resources or forms of capital are mobilised?) invites deeper inquiry into who contributes these resources and who bears the costs –whether financial, social, or political– of resilience-building efforts. These underlying dimensions are especially important when aiming for procedural fairness and distributive justice in resilience strategies. Furthermore, Question 6 (Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?) is key to critically assessing the intended outcomes of resilience policies and ensuring that they align with inclusive and just societal goals. More detailed, procedural justice here, concerns who participates in resilience-building decisions and whether the most vulnerable territories and communities have a meaningful voice in shaping policy responses. Distributive justice concerns who bears the costs and who benefits from resilience investments across territories (Rawls, 1971; Fraser, 1997; Schlosberg, 2004).

The following section presents the results of both the inductive content analysis of every single document and the insights extracted from our guiding questions and meta definition. Afterwards, the comparative analyses across these documents are presented.

Results and Discussions

This section begins by presenting the results extracted from each policy document, first regarding the thematic coding of the most prominent resilience-related themes, and second the responses provided by each document to the key contextualising questions which leads to clarify how the document interprets resilience. After the individual analysis of each document, the results of the comparative analysis are reported. The definition of meta-themes allows us to explore the thematic focus of the documents in relation to one another, identifying both the most recurrent themes and those that are least addressed.

European Union Global Strategy – EUGS (2016)

The thematic analysis of the EUGS reveals a geopolitical understanding of resilience, in line with the document's aim to reposition the EU as a capable and credible global actor. A total of 41 sentences containing the word resilience or its lexical variants (e.g., resilient) were extracted and inductively coded into five thematic categories, based on their dominant contextual focus

presented in Table 2. The EUGS frames resilience through a geopolitical stability and security-oriented lens, deeply concerned with the EU's foreign policy agenda. Although resilience is described as multidimensional, the text consistently situates it within the context of fragile states, border regions, migration management, and crisis response. The concept is most often deployed in relation to state-building, institutional reform, and the stabilisation of the EU's neighbourhood. Civil society and democratic values are acknowledged, but they are largely instrumental to broader goals of regional stability. These framings are tightly integrated with the EU's neighbourhood and enlargement policies, where resilience is envisioned as a stabilising instrument.

Table 2: Thematic Framing of Resilience in the EUGS (2016). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Security and stability	References to geopolitical stability, conflict prevention, terrorism, cyber defence, peace	10
Governance and State-Building	Discussions of institutional reform, law, public administration, states fragility	10
Societal Capacity and Civil Society Empowerment	Mentions of education, pluralism, democracy, civil society, and public discourse	10
Sustainable Development / Climate / Energy	Resilience in relation to climate, energy transitions, environmental sustainability	6
Migration and Humanitarian Policy	References to refugee origin/transit countries, migration management	3
Other / Unclassified	Mentions that are vague or thematically overlapping	2

In addition, raising the key questions presented in Table 3 about resilience helps us go beyond the quantitative results and helps to contextualise resilience and provide a definition of resilience in the document based on our meta definition reported in the methodological section.

Table 3: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience for EUGS (2016). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the EUGS
1. Subject: Who or what is desired to be resilient?	The EU itself with its states and institutions
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Conflict, fragility, terrorism, migration crises, cyber threats, energy insecurity, and geopolitical instability.
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised for resilience?	Institutional capacity, governance reforms, rule of law, civil society, strategic partnerships, and security/military tools.
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	Mainly in the EU neighbourhood (Eastern Europe, Middle East, North Africa), but also within EU territory, especially border regions.
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	In the context of ongoing and anticipated crises, with an emphasis on stabilisation and long-term global impact
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To stabilise fragile states, ensure regional security, manage migration, and secure the EU's strategic autonomy and geopolitical influence.

Based on this information, resilience for EUGS can be defined as the capacity of states and institutions -especially in the EU neighbourhood and at EU borders- to respond to or deal with conflict, fragility, terrorism, migration crises, cyber threats, energy insecurity, and geopolitical instability by mobilising institutional capacity, governance reforms, the rule of law, civil society engagement, strategic partnerships, and security tools. This capacity is situated within transboundary and regional contexts, particularly in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, and is exercised in response to ongoing and foreseeable security crises, with the strategic objective of stabilising fragile states, managing migration flows, and securing the EU's geopolitical interests and strategic autonomy.

European Green Deal (2019)

The European Green Deal is a central policy in this research, since it relates to the Green Transition policy and Just Transition Mechanism for which investigating the appropriate approach to resilience is fundamental. The European Green Deal frames resilience in close connection with climate action, environmental protection, and the just transition agenda. Although the term resilience (or its variants such as resilient) appears only 9 times in the document, these references are strongly anchored in the ecological and economic dimensions of resilience, especially in terms of climate-proofing infrastructure, strengthening nature-based solutions, and ensuring long-term systemic adaptability to environmental risks. The most prevalent theme is *Climate and Environmental Resilience*, referring to infrastructure adaptation, nature-based solutions, and climate-proof development. This is followed by *Economic and Financial Resilience*, particularly in the context of fiscal policy reforms and financial system adaptation to climate shocks. Lastly, *Just Transition* and *Global Resilience* also emerges, with emphasis on social fairness and international cooperation to reduce vulnerabilities and prevent crisis-related displacement.

Table 4: Thematic framing of resilience in the European Green Deal (2019). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Climate and Environmental Resilience	Climate-proofing, resilient infrastructure, nature-based solutions	4
Economic and Financial Resilience	Fiscal policy, financial system, economic shock absorptive capacity	3
Just Transition and community vulnerability	Equity, international cooperation, reducing vulnerability and displacement risks, focus on the regions and sectors that are most affected by the transition	2

The responses to the key contextualising questions of the resilience meta-definition are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience in the European Green Deal (2019). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the European Green Deal (2019)
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	Societies, economies, infrastructures, natural ecosystems, financial systems
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Climate change, biodiversity loss, natural hazards, environmental degradation,
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised?	Nature-based solutions, fiscal and financial instruments, policy reforms, innovation
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	Across the EU and globally, Regions, place-based resilience is implicit in land-use, energy, and infrastructure sectors
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	Over the long term, especially in anticipation of climate-related risks and during the transition to carbon neutrality
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To ensure climate neutrality, sustainable development, economic competitiveness, and social justice during green transitions

From the resilience-related content of the European Green Deal the term can be interpreted as the capacity of European regions and societies, infrastructures, ecosystems, and economic systems to respond to or deal with environmental, economic, and financial risks particularly those related to climate change and biodiversity loss, by mobilising nature-based solutions, green finance, fiscal reforms, and climate-resilient development strategies. This capacity is situated across multiple scales within the EU and beyond, and it is exercised with a forward-looking, long-term perspective. The primary objective is to enable a green and just transition, enhance environmental sustainability, reduce systemic vulnerabilities, and foster economic and social robustness in the face of future ecological crises.

2020 Strategic Foresight Report

The thematic analysis of the Strategic Foresight Report 2020 shows a multidimensional understanding of resilience, which is consistent with the document's role as a tool for anticipatory governance and strategic planning. From 91 extracted sentences (we excluded the appearances in the titles and table of contents) explicitly containing "resilience" or a related variant, each was inductively coded and seven themes were extracted based on its dominant meaning (Table 6). The report presents resilience as a broad, future-oriented governance paradigm. Resilience is articulated as a cross-sectoral concept to support the EU's capacity to navigate systemic transitions, particularly regarding the green and digital dimensions and to

prepare for complex future shocks. The dominant framing centres on resilience as anticipatory governance, with a strong institutional and procedural orientation. The document emphasises adaptability, learning, and transformation. The coding reveals that the concept appears most frequently in the context of governance and institutions, followed by societal and civil resilience and green/environmental transformation. Mentions of economic and technological resilience also exist, although less dominantly. This could mean that resilience in the Foresight Report is less about responding to external threats and more about fostering internal adaptive capacities and cross-sectoral policy making.

Table 6: Thematic framing of resilience in the Strategic Foresight Report 2020. Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Governance and Institutions	Policy integration, foresight mechanisms, and institutional coordination	18
Societal and Civil Resilience	Mentions of education, public trust, democratic values, social cohesion, and health	13
Security and Geopolitics	References to external threats, strategic autonomy, crisis preparedness, and cyber defence	12
Green and Environmental Resilience	Climate adaptation, biodiversity, ecological sustainability, green transition	11
Economic and Infrastructural Resilience	Internal market stability, supply chain continuity, financial robustness	6
Digital and Technological Resilience	Cybersecurity, digital infrastructure, data governance	3
Global and External Resilience	Development cooperation, multilateral partnerships, global engagement	2
Other / Unclassified	Abstract or overlapping uses of resilience without clear thematic focus like repeated structural uses “resilience dashboards” and non-clear mentions like “strengthen resilience”	26

In addition, Table 7 presents the results of the second methodological attempt which leads to the concept definition for the Strategic Foresight Report based on the meta definition presented in the methodology.

Table 7: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience in the Strategic Foresight Report 2020. Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the Strategic Foresight Report 2020
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	The European Union as a whole, including its institutions, economies, societies, and governance structures. There are also references to sectors (e.g., digital, green, health).
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Systemic risks and shocks such as pandemics, climate change, digital transitions, geopolitical instability, economic disruptions, and long-term structural transformations.
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised?	Foresight tools, institutional adaptability, innovation systems, digital infrastructure, social trust, skills, public investment, and intergenerational solidarity.
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	Primarily EU-wide, with emphasis on transnational coordination and systems-level foresight. Place-based vulnerability is acknowledged but not deeply explored.
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	over short-, medium- and long-term horizons, especially in anticipatory governance; during transitions and recovery phases; resilience is treated as a forward-looking and continuous strategic capacity.
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To ensure strategic autonomy, manage uncertainty, future-proof EU policies, and enable the Union to shape global transitions in a sustainable, fair, and inclusive manner.

Based on this information, resilience for Strategic Foresight Report 2020 can be defined as the capacity of the European Union, its institutions, and societies to deal with systemic transitions and complex disruptions such as climate change, digitalisation, health crises, and economic shocks by mobilising foresight policies, institutional coordination, data-driven monitoring and decision-support tools, and adaptive governance mechanisms. This capacity is situated across multiple spatial levels -within the EU, among Member States, and in global partnerships- and is exercised over short-, medium- and long-term horizons. The strategic objective is to build forward-looking, adaptable, and sustainable systems that can preserve democratic values, promote economic and ecological transformation, and strengthen the EU's strategic autonomy in an uncertain world.

Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020)

The Territorial Agenda 2030 looks at resilience primarily through the lens of place-based development and territorial cohesion, emphasising the differentiated vulnerabilities and capacities of regions, cities, and local communities across Europe. Resilience in this context is described as the ability of places to adapt to long-term transformations such as climate change, demographic shifts, and technological transitions, while ensuring quality of life across territories. The document is the first one that explicitly highlights the spatially uneven vulnerabilities and the need for integrated, locally tailored responses that strengthen territorial resilience. This thematic focus is confirmed by the coding of resilience-related emerging

sentences. The most dominant theme is *Territorial and Place-Based Resilience*, which includes references to rural and urban contexts, regional governance, and spatial justice. These are followed by references to *Green and Environmental Resilience*, where resilience is linked to climate adaptation and sustainable transitions. Less frequent but still present are mentions of *Economic and Infrastructural Resilience*, often framed through access to services and transport connectivity.

Table 8: Thematic Framing of Resilience in the Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Territorial and Place-Based Resilience	Mentions of local/regional resilience, place-based approaches, urban-rural dynamics	8
Green and Environmental Resilience	Sustainability, biodiversity, climate change, ecological transitions	3
Economic and Infrastructural Resilience	Resilience of economic systems, public services, transport, digital infrastructure	1

In addition, the answers of the contextualisation questions of the resilience meta definition for the Territorial Agenda 2030 are reported in Table 9.

Table 9: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience for Territorial Agenda 2030 (2020). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the Strategic Territorial Agenda 2030
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	Regions, cities, and local communities, particularly those facing structural disadvantages.
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Climatehange, globalisation, demographic shifts, economic restructuring, social inequality, and external shocks such as pandemics
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised?	Place-based knowledge, governance capacity at all levels, policy coordination, regional innovation systems, natural capital, and social cohesion.
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	The spatial dimension is central in the document. It refers to the whole European territory with strong emphasis on place-based development, territorial diversity, and spatial justice. Specific focus on inner peripheries, cross-border regions, and disadvantaged rural/urban areas emerges.
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	In the long term, to ensure sustainable development, cohesion, and the ability to deal with slow-burn crises and future uncertainties.
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To reduce regional disparities, enhance territorial cohesion, foster sustainability and well-being, and support a just transition in the face of structural and environmental changes.

Based on the information provided in Table 9, the Territorial Agenda 2030 interprets resilience as the capacity of European regions, cities, and communities, mostly those facing structural or geographic disadvantages, to respond to or deal with complex socio-economic and environmental challenges such as increasing pressures on the environment, demographic

decline, globalisation, and increasing imbalances and inequalities. This is achieved by mobilising place-based governance, integrated policy tools, local knowledge, natural and social capital, and cooperative multilevel frameworks of territorial governance. Resilience is situated in diverse territorial contexts, including rural, peripheral, and cross-border regions suggesting a functional approach rather than sticking to the administrative boundaries. It is pursued over the long term, with the objective of promoting spatial justice, territorial cohesion, and sustainable well-being for all citizens across the European territory.

Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021)

The Recovery and Resilience Facility frames resilience as a central objective for EU economic and structural reform, especially as a response to the COVID-19 crisis. The concept is introduced as both a normative objective and a technical one, guiding national recovery plans and shaping EU funding allocations for combating the negative pandemic impacts. Resilience in this context primarily refers to economic and financial robustness, macroeconomic stability, sustainable public finances, structural reform, and growth-oriented investment. As seen in Table 10, The thematic analysis confirms this framing: the majority of references refers to *economic and financial resilience*, including debt sustainability, fiscal reform, and productive investment. A secondary theme emerges in the form of *green and climate resilience*, associated with carbon neutrality, energy transition, and ecological sustainability. Other dimensions, such as social welfare, institutional capacity, or digital infrastructure are also mentioned in the document but are comparatively less emergent. The dominance of economic language reflects RRF's design as an efficiency-oriented recovery tool, where resilience is measured through quantifiable outcomes tied to national reform policies and actions.

Table 10: Thematic Framing of Resilience in the Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Economic and Financial Resilience	Fiscal reforms, economic recovery, macroeconomic stability, and sustainable growth	84
Green and Climate Resilience	Environmental sustainability, decarbonisation, green transition, and climate adaptation	13

The guiding questions and corresponding answers to contextualise resilience and provide the document interpretation of the term are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience for Recovery and Resilience Facility (2021). Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the Recovery and Resilience Facility
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	Member States' economies, labour markets, health systems, and public institutions. The EU as a whole is also a target of increased resilience.
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Economic shocks (especially COVID-19), public health crises, climate change, digital transition, social inequality, and geopolitical disruptions.
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised?	Financial support via national plans, digital and green investments, institutional reforms, social cohesion measures, and strategic autonomy instruments.
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	Across all Member States with a commitment to address regional disparities. However, no strict territorial or place-based mechanisms are detailed.
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	During crisis recovery (post-pandemic), with a forward-looking agenda for long-term transformation and strategic autonomy.
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To foster inclusive recovery, reduce vulnerabilities, ensure competitiveness, accelerate the twin green and digital transitions, and prepare for future challenges.

The document itself, provides a definition of resilience "the ability to face economic, social and environmental shocks or persistent structural changes in a fair, sustainable and inclusive way" However, a deeper reading of the document, together with our analysis presented in Table 11, suggest a broader definition of resilience as capacity of EU Member States' economies, institutions, and social systems to respond to and recover from multidimensional challenges, and specially the COVID-19 pandemic, climate and digital transitions, and social inequalities, by mobilising financial resources, institutional reforms, and policy instruments aimed at enhancing strategic autonomy, innovation, and sustainability. This capacity is targeted across the EU, with an emphasis on reducing regional disparities, although local and place-based vulnerabilities are not explicitly taken into consideration. Temporally, resilience is promoted as both a short-term recovery mechanism and a long-term transformative agenda. The overall objective is to foster the Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion by improving crisis preparedness, and growth potential of the Member States.

EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027 - the Mid-Term Review Communication (2025)

In the Mid-Term Review Communication of the EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, resilience is a guiding principle for evaluating the effectiveness of EU policy responses to recent economic, environmental, and technological disruptions. The document as presented in Table 12, refers to resilience mostly through an economic and financial lens, reflecting concerns about the strategic autonomy of the regions and their ability to overcome shocks while advancing green and digital transitions. Although resilience is also referenced in relation to climate action, digital

innovation, and institutional capacity, these are far less prominent. A notable number of mentions remain uncategorised, reflecting abstract or general uses that are not clearly associated with a single policy area. Overall, the concept is used as a performance-oriented tool to assess whether EU action is delivering stable and forward-looking growth in times of growing uncertainties.

Table 12: Thematic Framing of Resilience in the Mid-Term Review Communication (2025) of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. Source: Authors' own elaboration

Thematic Category	Coding Criteria	Frequency
Economic and Financial Resilience	Macro-financial stability, inflation management, growth investment, fiscal balance	11
Green and Climate Resilience	Energy transition, carbon reduction, ecological sustainability, climate adaptation	3
Digital and Technological Resilience	Cybersecurity, digital connectivity, AI, digital public infrastructure	1
Institutional and Governance Resilience	Policy coordination, institutional capacity, administrative reform	1
Other / Unclassified	Vague or general uses not clearly associated with a specific policy domain	6

It is important to note that Resilience has become a defining pillar of the EU's Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, under *Heading 2: Cohesion, Resilience, and Values*, which constitutes the largest budgetary allocation among the seven *Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)* headings and reflects the EU's strategic prioritisation of systemic robustness and inclusive recovery across regions.

Table 13: Guiding questions for contextualising resilience for the Mid-Term Review Communication (2025) of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. Source: Authors' own elaboration

Key contextualising question	Responses from the Mid-Term Review Communication 2025 of EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027
1. Subject: Who or what is expected to be resilient?	Regions and communities across the EU, particularly those facing structural disadvantages or undergoing transitions (e.g., energy, digital).
2. Stressor or Change: Resilience to what?	Economic shocks, social inequalities, climate-related risks, public health emergencies (e.g., COVID-19), and technological transitions.
3. Resources and Capacities: What forms of capital or assets can be mobilised?	Financial instruments, local knowledge, social innovation, human capital, infrastructure investment, and place-based strategies.
4. Spatial Context: Where is resilience located or enacted?	Territorial dimension is central: emphasis on less developed areas, border regions, outermost regions, and rural areas.
5. Temporal Dimension: When does resilience matter?	Long-term and anticipatory planning for 2021–2027, but also recovery-focused in light of COVID-19.
6. Purpose: Why is resilience being promoted, and to what end?	To build-back-better, and to reduce disparities between regions, support cohesion and solidarity, enable structural transformation, and foster upward convergence.

According to the responses to the guiding questions presented in Table 13, in the context of the EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, resilience is interpreted as the capacity of European regions and communities, particularly those facing socio-economic, geographic, or environmental disadvantages, to respond to or deal with economic disruptions, climate change, public health emergencies, and EU transitions by mobilising EU financial instruments, local knowledge, infrastructure investments, and inclusive governance mechanisms. This capacity is exercised at the territorial, regional and local scale, especially in vulnerable areas, and is framed over both short-term recovery and long-term transformation horizons. The purpose is to build-back-better after disasters and at the same time to promote economic, social, and territorial cohesion, reduce regional disparities, and promote sustainable and equitable development across the EU.

Results of comparative analysis and trend exploration

The comparative analysis which is presented in this section shows a clear conceptual shift in the EU's resilience discourse, reflecting its fragmentation based on different policy priorities. The analysed documents span from security and geopolitical stability to economic, environmental, and territorial dimensions, revealing both the thematic variety and the internal tensions of EU resilience discourse. The analysis identifies a set of recurring meta-themes presented in Table 14, which constitute the core of the EU's resilience narrative.

The percentage-based analysis of resilience mentions across the six EU policy documents presented in Table 14 highlights the differentiated emphasis placed on each meta-theme. The EUGS shows an emphasis on security and stability, while also addressing governance and

societal resilience, affirming its geopolitical lens. The European Green Deal emphasises environmental, economic, and intergenerational dimensions of resilience, introducing themes of systemic change, climate neutrality, and just transition, which extend the EU's resilience discourse into longer-term ecological and social transformations. The Strategic Foresight Report 2020 distributes resilience discourse more evenly across multiple domains, particularly governance, societal capacity, and green dimensions, indicating a broader strategic interpretation. Territorial Agenda 2030 is dominated by territorial and place-based resilience, consistent with its spatial focus. RRF centres resilience within an economic and financial framework, reflecting its performance-driven orientation for post-pandemic development. The Mid-Term Review Communication of Cohesion Policy 2021–2027 allocates over half of its resilience-related content to economic concerns, though with some inclusion of governance, environmental, and digital resilience.

Table 14: percentage-based heatmap of resilience framings across the six EU policy documents. Source: Authors' own elaboration

Meta themes	EUGS	Green Deal	Foresight	Territorial Agenda	RRF	Cohesion Policy
Security and Geopolitical Stability	**33%**	0%	**22%**	0%	0%	0%
Governance and Institutions	**26%**	0%	**28%**	0%	0%	6%
Societal and Civil Resilience	**26%**	0%	**20%**	0%	0%	0%
Green and Climate Resilience	**15%**	**45%**	**17%**	**25%**	**13%**	**19%**
Economic and Financial Resilience	0%	**33%**	**9%**	**8%**	**87%**	**69%**
Digital and Technological Resilience	0%	0%	**5%**	0%	0%	**6%**
Territorial and Place-Based Resilience	0%	0%	0%	**67%**	0%	0%
Just Transition and community vulnerability	0%	**22%**	0%	0%	0%	0%

The results indicate that two dimensions receive the greatest emphasis in the EU's resilience agenda: *economic and financial resilience*, and *green and climate resilience*. In contrast, *territorial and place-based resilience* is completely absent across the analysed documents, with the only exception of the Territorial Agenda 2030. Equity-related elements, just transition and community vulnerability also receive limited attention. This finding is particularly significant because the two neglected dimension are tied together. The uneven distribution of resilience capacities and vulnerabilities across European territories means that a policy discourse dominated by economic and environmental framings, without territorial differentiation, risks reproducing rather than reducing spatial inequalities, and place-based vulnerabilities.

This tension becomes more visible when examining how practically resilience investments have been distributed and implemented across territories. As Medeiros et al. (2024) argue, the impact

of EU Cohesion Policy varies significantly across regions and is shaped by policy design, implementation efficiency, and the broader socio-economic context, meaning that less developed regions do not automatically benefit equally from nominally redistributive instruments. This is compounded by the indicator-driven and performance-oriented logic that EU policy increasingly imposes on regions. As Demeterova et al. (2020) demonstrate in the context of cross-border cooperation, such logics put disproportionate pressure on regions with weaker administrative and institutional capacity, which are least equipped to meet reporting and measurement requirements, yet most in need of support. Furthermore, Bourdin et al. (2024) show that policy responses to systemic shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic have been asymmetric across European regions, and argue that territorial cohesion policies need to be explicitly tailored to empower regions and local governments rather than channelled through uniform national frameworks. Taken together, the dominant framings for resilience operate at national level or sectoral scale, systematically underweighting the place-based vulnerabilities, especially in rural, peripheral, and cross-border territories.

Conclusions

Since the adoption of the EUGS in 2016, which brought resilience into the EU policy agenda, the concept has expanded beyond its originally security- and stability-oriented roots into a multidimensional but fragmented framework for governance and policy action. Through a qualitative inductive content analysis of six key EU policy documents, combined with a set of guiding questions adapted from Meerow et al. (2016) to contextualise how resilience is interpreted by each document, the paper reveals significant variations in how resilience is framed, at what scale it is applied, and towards what purpose it is pursued. The results show a clear conceptual trajectory. In important EU documents -including EUGS and RRF- resilience is framed primarily as a tool to safeguard institutional capacity, market functioning, and border stability, reflecting a logic of security and continuity rather than one of inclusive or transformative change. This contrasts with other policy documents, such as the European Green Deal and the Strategic Foresight Report, where resilience is articulated as a forward-looking and more transformative concept linked to long-term sustainability, systemic transitions, and anticipatory governance.

The comparative analysis shows that EU resilience discourse is dominated by economic/financial and green/climate framings, while territorial and place-based dimensions, as well as equity concerns remain comparatively marginal. This is a major limitation, since resilience and vulnerability are inherently place-based: they depend on how resources, capacities, risks, and institutional support are spatially distributed across territories (Brunetta et

al., 2025). Ignoring this territorial dimension means overlooking the fact that regions and communities do not enter crises or transitions from the same starting point, cannot follow equal processes, and therefore do not bear costs, constraints, or benefits equally. This also risks depoliticising the roots of vulnerabilities by translating structural and territorial inequalities into apolitical measures of self-reliance, efficiency and stability (Mohabat Doost et al., 2023). In addition, As Adger (2008) argues, systems can be equally resilient while generating vastly different and unjust outcomes, meaning that resilience alone is not inherently a positive attribute when it contributes to the persistence of unjust status quos.

In this sense, advancing *just territorial resilience* requires moving beyond technocratic models (towards governance arrangements that explicitly address power asymmetries and actively include the most vulnerable territories in shaping just and green transition pathways. In particular, approaches grounded in participatory governance, subsidiarity, and locally embedded decision-making (Ostrom, 1990) highlight how resilience strategies can better account for differentiated territorial capacities and vulnerabilities. Similarly, a spatial justice perspective emphasising equity, democracy, and diversity (Fainstein, 2010) provides a lens to effectively address issues of representation and redistribution for resilience instruments. This is precisely where the notion of territorial resilience (Brunetta et al., 2019) becomes conceptually and normatively relevant. It reframes resilience not only as abstract system performance or simple shock recovery, but as the place-based capacity of territories to absorb, adapt, and transform through context-specific, and multi-scalar governance arrangements, thereby offering a clearer grounding for transitions whose justice dimension often remains insufficiently defined in policy discourse (Shaker and Berisha, 2025).

Finally, we would like to remark some future research recommendations derived from this work. The analysis is confined to a selected corpus of EU-level strategic documents, and does not extend to national recovery plans, regional operational programmes, or sectoral strategies. Extending the research to such programmes would allow for understanding of how EU-level resilience framings are translated, adapted, or contested across different governance levels. Moreover, the scope of the research was not to apply the analysis on empirical case studies at sub-national level. Empirical case studies at sub-national level –focusing on how resilience is concretely enacted in vulnerable territories– would provide the grounded, place-based evidence that this paper calls for.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Authors statement on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools

The authors confirm that AI tools were used only in a supportive capacity in the preparation of this manuscript (e.g. to identify typos and linguistic errors and text refinements). All substantive arguments, interpretations, and conclusions are the sole work of the authors, and the authors take full responsibility for the content. The authors also confirm that all references cited are real, have been verified by the authors, and are not AI-generated or fabricated.

References

Adger, W. N. (2008). Resilience and vulnerability. In M. Leach (Ed.), Re-framing resilience: A symposium report (pp. 5-7). STEPS Centre. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://steps-centre.org/publication/re-framing-resilience/

Bosse, G., & Vieira, A. (2023). Resilient states vs. resilient societies? The 'dark side' of resilience narratives in EU relations with authoritarian regimes: A case study of Belarus. Journal of Contemporary European Studies, 31(4), 1058–1072. https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2023.2211938

Bourdin, S., Moodie, J., Gassen, N. S., Evers, D., Adobati, F., Amdaoud, M., ... Remete, Z. (2024). COVID-19 as a systemic shock: curb or catalyst for proactive policies towards territorial cohesion? Regional Studies, 58(8), 1543–1556. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2023.2242387

Brunetta, G., Ceravolo, R., Barbieri, C. A., Borghini, A., de Carlo, F., Mela, A., Beltramo, S., Longhi, A., De Lucia, G., Ferraris, S., Pezzoli, A., Quagliolo, C., Salata, S., & Voghera, A. (2019). Territorial resilience: Toward a proactive meaning for spatial planning. Sustainability, 11(8), Article 2286. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11082286

Brunetta, G., Mohabat Doost, D., Berisha, E., Garnero, G., Pellerey, F., Tedesco, C., & Pincegher, B. (2025). Mapping Territorial Vulnerability for Resilience Planning. The R3C-GeoResilience Tool Applied to the Union of Bassa Romagna (Italy). Urban Science, 9(10), 400. https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci9100400

Cabinet Office. (2011). Community Resilience Programme: Government response to consultation held in 2010. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a79b908ed915d07d35b7a13/Govt-Response-CR-Consultation-20110307.pdf

Ciplet, D., & Harrison, J. L. (2020). Transition tensions: Mapping conflicts in movements for a just and sustainable transition. Environmental Politics, 29(3), 435–456. https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2019.1595883

Council of the European Union: General Secretariat of the Council. (2009). European Security Strategy: A secure Europe in a better world. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://doi.org/10.2860/1402

Davoudi, S. (2019). Resilience, uncertainty, and adaptive planning. Annual Review of Territorial Governance in the Western Balkans, I, 120–128. https://doi.org/10.32034/CP-TGWBAR-I01-10

Davoudi, S. (2018). Just resilience. City & Community, 17(1), 3–7. https://doi.org/10.1111/cico.12281

Davoudi, S., Brooks, E., & Mehmood, A. (2013). Evolutionary Resilience and Strategies for Climate Adaptation. Planning Practice & Research, 28(3), 307–322. https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2013.787695

Davoudi, S., Shaw, K., Haider, L. J., Quinlan, A. E., Peterson, G. D., Wilkinson, C., Fünfgeld, H., McEvoy, D., & Porter, L. (2012). Resilience: A bridging concept or a dead end? Planning Theory & Practice, 13(2), 299–333. https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2012.677124

Demeterova, B., Goodwin-Hawkins, B., & Fischer, T. (2020). Conceptualisations of Territorial Cohesion in Central European border regions. European Planning Studies, 28(12), 2287–2306. https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2020.1716692

European External Action Service. (2016). European Union Global Strategy (EUGS): Shared vision, common action: A stronger Europe. A global strategy for the European Union's foreign and security policy. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en/global-strategy-foreign-and-security-policy-european-union

European Commission. (2019). The European Green Deal. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:b828d165-1c22-11ea-8c1f-01aa75ed71a1.0002.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

European Commission. (2020a). 2020 Strategic Foresight Report. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategic-foresight/2020-strategic-foresight-report_en

European Commission. (2020b). NextGenerationEU. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/eu-borrower-investor-relations/nextgenerationeu_en

European Commission. (2021). Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://commission.europa.eu/business-economy-euro/economic-recovery/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

European Committee of the Regions. (2025). Implementation of the Just Transition Mechanism and synergies with other EU funds. Publications Office of the European Union. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://doi.org/10.2863/8791286

European Parliament & Council of the European Union. (2021). Cohesion Policy 2021–2027: Investing in Europe's regions and cities. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/2021-2027_en

Fainstein, S. S. (2010). The Just City. Cornell University Press. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7zhwt

Fraser, N. (1997). Justice interruptus: Critical reflections on the "postsocialist" condition. Routledge. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://www.routledge.com/Justice-Interruptus-Critical-Reflections-on-the-Postsocialist-Condition/Fraser/p/book/9780415917957

Holling, C. S. (1973). Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems. Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics, 4, 1–23. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2096802

Holling, C. S. (1996). Engineering resilience versus ecological resilience. In P. Schulze (Ed.), Engineering within ecological constraints (pp. 31–44). Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/4919

Jaksa, R. A., Salamin, G., Lőcsei, H., Igari, A., Csizovszky, A., Tarnóczky, T., Brunetta, G., Caldarice, O., Cotella, G., Abastante, F., Mohabat Doost, D., Berisha, E., Pincegher, B., Caputo, M., Tapia, C., Giacometti, A., Salonen, H., Fernández, A., Sanjuan, C., Capizzi, P., Cortes, J., Farradellas, I., Larrea, E., Biosca, O., Ulied, A., del Castillo, H., Ippoliti, C., Álvarez, C., & Méndez, G. (2025). Territorialising resilience: Transforming Europe for an age of crisis (TERRES) – Final report. ESPON EGTC. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://www.espon.eu/publications/terres-final-report

Juncos, A. E. (2017). Resilience as the new EU foreign policy paradigm: A pragmatist turn? European Security, 26(1), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839.2016.1247809

MacKinnon, D., & Derickson, K. D. (2013). From resilience to resourcefulness: A critique of resilience policy and activism. Progress in Human Geography, 37(2), 253–270. https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132512454775

Medeiros, E., Potluka, O., Demeterova, B., & Musiałkowska, I. (2024). EU Cohesion Policy towards territorial cohesion? Regional Studies, 58(8), 1513–1517. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343404.2024.2349736

Meerow, S., Newell, J. P., & Stults, M. (2016). Defining urban resilience: A review. Landscape and Urban Planning, 147, 38–49. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2015.11.011

Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development of the EU and EFTA Countries. (2020). Territorial Agenda 2030: A future for all places. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://territorialagenda.eu/

Mohabat Doost, D., Brunetta, G., & Caldarice, O. (2023). In search of equitable resilience: Unravelling the links between urban resilience planning and social equity. Sustainability, 15(18), Article 13818. https://doi.org/10.3390/su151813818

OECD. (2009). Concepts and dilemmas of state building in fragile situations: From fragility to resilience. OECD Journal on Development, 9(3). https://doi.org/10.1787/journal_dev-v9-3-en

Ostrom, E. (1990). Governing the commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511807763

Pelling, M. (2010). Adaptation to climate change: From resilience to transformation. Taylor & Francis Group. Retrieved April 10, 2026, from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/polito-ebooks/detail.action?docID=958494

Rawls, J. (1971). A theory of justice. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjf9z6v

Schlosberg, D. (2004). Reconceiving environmental justice: Global movements and political theories. Environmental Politics, 13(3), 517–540. https://doi.org/10.1080/0964401042000229025

Shaker, Y., & Berisha, E. (2025). Just green transitions: Between terminological inexactitudes, conceptual fragmentation, and the exigency for a theoretical framework. European Spatial Research and Policy, 32(1), 121–138. https://doi.org/10.18778/1231-1952.32.1.05

Tocci, N. (2020). Resilience and the role of the European Union in the world. Contemporary Security Policy, 41(2), 176–194. https://doi.org/10.1080/13523260.2019.1640342

Walker, B. H., Ludwig, D., Holling, C. S., & Peterman, R. M. (1981). Stability of semi-arid savanna grazing systems. The Journal of Ecology, 69(2), 473–498. https://doi.org/10.2307/2259679

Walker, B., Holling, C. S., Carpenter, S. R., & Kinzig, A. (2004). Resilience, adaptability and transformability in social-ecological systems. Ecology and Society, 9(2), Article 5. https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-00650-090205