Index Methodology

How the Human Stability Index is constructed and interpreted

The Human Stability Index (HSI) is designed as a **longitudinal reference instrument**, not a point-in-time scorecard. Its methodology is structured to observe how human stability is maintained or eroded under interacting pressures, and to enable consistent comparison across regions and over time.

HSI does not forecast events or prescribe policy. It documents conditions.

Conceptual foundation

The Index is built on a core premise: **human stability is a system property**. It does not arise from a single domain, but from the interaction of multiple pressures operating simultaneously across political, economic, technological, environmental, and social systems.

Accordingly, HSI is structured as a **multi-dimensional composite index**, designed to capture both:

- underlying structural conditions, and

- accumulating or acute stressors that influence stability outcomes.

Index structure

HSI comprises **seven stability dimensions**, selected based on their repeated presence in historical and contemporary instability pathways:

1. **Conflict and Security**

2. **Economic Security**

3. **Technological Disruption**

4. **Environmental Stress**

5. **Food Systems**

6. **Public Safety**

7. **Social Cohesion**

Each dimension represents a distinct domain of human stability, while remaining analytically linked to the others.

No single dimension is treated as dominant. Instability most often emerges through **interaction**, not isolation.

Indicator selection

Indicators included in the Index are selected using four criteria:

- **Relevance** - demonstrable linkage to human stability or instability

- **Comparability** - availability across regions and time

- **Credibility** - sourced from established international institutions, research bodies, or validated datasets

- **Stability sensitivity** - ability to detect meaningful directional change rather than short-term noise

Indicators are reviewed periodically to ensure continued relevance and methodological consistency.

Types of indicators

HSI draws on three classes of indicators:

- **Structural indicators**
  Capturing long-term conditions that shape baseline stability (e.g. institutional capacity, demographic pressure, resource availability).

- **Pressure indicators**
  Capturing accumulating stress that erodes stability over time (e.g. affordability strain, displacement trends, labour insecurity).

- **Shock indicators**
  Capturing acute disruption events that test system resilience (e.g. conflict escalation, extreme environmental events, service collapse).

This distinction allows the Index to differentiate between **background fragility** and **event-driven stress**.

Normalisation and aggregation

Indicators are normalised to enable comparison across regions and time. Normalisation is applied **within dimensions**, not across them, to preserve analytical integrity.

Key principles include:

- preservation of indicator directionality,

- mitigation of outlier distortion, and

- emphasis on trend sensitivity over point precision.

Indicators are aggregated to produce **dimension-level stability profiles**, which are then assessed collectively to form an overall stability profile.

HSI prioritises **patterns and trajectories** over headline rankings.

Weighting approach

Each of the seven dimensions contributes equally to the Index at the composite level.

Within dimensions, indicators are weighted based on:

- empirical relevance,

- data coverage reliability, and

- signal-to-noise characteristics.

This approach reflects empirical evidence that instability is more often driven by **cross-domain coupling** than by the dominance of any single factor.

Longitudinal design

The Human Stability Index is explicitly designed for **longitudinal use**.

The **Baseline Report 2026** establishes the initial reference state. Future editions will measure:

- directional change relative to this baseline,

- convergence or divergence across regions, and

- the emergence of compounding risk patterns.

Update cadence prioritises **analytical clarity over frequency**.

Interpretation and limitations

HSI is an observational framework. It does not:

- predict specific events,

- assign causality with certainty, or

- replace local or sector-specific analysis.

Data limitations - including reporting lag, regional gaps, and informal system opacity - are mitigated through triangulation and conservative interpretation.

Users are encouraged to interpret the Index as **contextual orientation**, not deterministic assessment.

Use and citation

The Human Stability Index is published as a **public analytical reference**.

It is intended for use by:

- governments and public institutions,

- international organisations,

- businesses and risk functions,

- researchers and educators, and

- informed individuals.

Guidance on citation is provided in the Baseline Report.

Methodological position

The Human Stability Index is designed to make visible a simple but increasingly consequential reality:

Stability is not the absence of disruption, but the capacity to absorb, adapt, and coordinate under sustained stress.

The methodology exists to observe that capacity over time.