Kaunas University of Technology
Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

The Role of Citizens in the Implementation of Total Defence Principle in Lithuania

Master's Final Degree Project

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Summary

As geopolitical situation intensified in Europe, the principle of total defence has been embraced as a national defence policy that involves citizens together with other sectors of the country into defence capabilities. Instead of relying on its military and NATO allies, Lithuania, a young democracy is one of those countries which implemented total defence principle. This master's project explores the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence in Lithuania focusing on citizen participation in civil resistance. The topic demonstrates relevance as it addresses the need to understand the role of citizens in Lithuania's total defence in the face of emerging geopolitical threats. At the same time, the project shows novelty as it focuses on Lithuania's implementation of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance, providing a thorough analysis of citizen involvement in defence policy and filling a gap on total defence application in young democracies such as Lithuania. The research problem is formulated as follows: development and challenges of the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. The main research object is the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania while the aim of the project is to evaluate the involvement of citizens and define the progress of civil resistance strategy in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. The project composed four objectives to reach the aim of the research which are (1) to analyse a theoretical framework of the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence, (2) to explore the context and the legal environment of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence in Lithuania, (3) to define the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania based on strategic documents and (4) to identify the progress of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. The project used qualitative research methodology consisting of a systematic literature review of defence policies in Nordic countries and Switzerland and a contextual analysis of Lithuania's legal environment of citizen involvement in defence policy implementation. Moreover, secondary data from annual governmental reports and public opinion surveys were used to complement the insights of eight conducted interviews with subject matter experts. The key findings of the research reveal that Lithuania integrated its citizens into the national defence through the principle of total defence in the current political background. The small country took measures similar to the examples from the Nordics and Switzerland and addressed national challenges by strengthening its overall defence posture, increasing resilience and deterring possible enemy. Conducted theoretical framework indicated that the application of total defence and specifically the focus of including citizens provide them the role within defence capabilities and assure collective preparation for civil resistance during peacetime. Equally important is to define the role of citizens and their involvement in countries' normative and strategic documents, however, as research found, limitations emerge when it comes to the inclusion of ethnic minority groups into building resilience and preparing these citizens for civil resistance. While it is important to define the roles for ministries and organisations such as the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (LRU) when implementing the Strategy too, the paper finds

that it is crucial to employ civil society organisations, especially, NGOs who too educate and train citizens for civil resistance. The inclusion of NGOs into the implementation of the Strategy can substitute the personnel shortages experienced by Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department (MCRD) and LRU. Nevertheless, Lithuania demonstrates commitment and progress when implementing the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance, however, the implementation of the Strategy appears to be focused mainly on the Ministry of National Defence and LRU. Other bodies such as the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (SOCMIN) on the other hand lack attention and funding to raise people's participation in voluntary and community bond activities which greatly contribute to strengthening resilience of the country, therefore, there is a need to allocate resources for other ministries to perform their tasks when implementing the Strategy and possibly involving NGOs to help SOCMIN to achieve its goals. If Lithuania addresses these limitations, it can serve as a model to other countries throughout Europe who seek to involve their citizens into national defence by applying the principle of total defence. The project consists of 63 pages, 15 tables, 13 figures and two appendices. The project used 49 sources of scientific literature and 35 information sources.

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Santrauka

Besikeičiant geopolitinei situacijai Europoje, visuotinės gynybos principas vis dažniau yra naudojamas kaip krašto apsaugos politika, kuri į gynybinius pajėgumus įtraukia piliečius kartu su kitais šalies sektoriais. Užuot pasikliaunant tik savo ginkluotosiomis pajėgomis ir NATO sąjungininkėmis, Lietuva yra viena iš tų šalių, kurios įgyvendina visuotinės gynybos principą. Šiame magistro baigiamajame projekte yra nagrinėjamas piliečių vaidmuo įgyvendinant visuotinę gynybą Lietuvoje, daugiausia dėmesio skiriant piliečių dalyvavimui pilietiniame pasipriešinime. Temos aktualumas atsispindi tame, kad Lietuva, geopolitinių grėsmių akivaizdoje, parodo piliečių vaidmens visuotinėje gynyboje svarbą. Taip pat, temos naujumas yra akivaizdus, kadangi ji yra orientuota į Lietuvos Respublikos piliečių rengimo pilietiniam pasipriešinimui strategijos (toliau Strategijos) įgyvendinimą, per išsamią piliečių dalyvavimo gynybos politikoje analizę, kuri prisideda prie spragų užpildymo visuotinės gynybos principo pritaikymo Lietuvoje. Tyrimo problema yra suformuluota taip: piliečių vaidmens visuotinės gynybos principo įgyvendinimo raida ir iššūkiai Lietuvoje. Pagrindinis tyrimo objektas – piliečių vaidmuo visuotinės gynybos principo įgyvendinime Lietuvoje o projekto tikslas – įvertinti piliečių įtraukimą ir nustatyti pilietinio pasipriešinimo strategijos pažangą įgyvendinant visuotinės gynybos principą Lietuvoje. Tyrimo tikslui pasiekti buvo sukurti keturi uždaviniai, kurie yra (1) išanalizuoti piliečių vaidmens teorinę sistemą įgyvendinant visuotinės gynybos principą, (2) ištirti piliečių įtraukimo į gynybą kontekstą ir teisinę aplinką, visuotinės gynybos įgyvendinime Lietuvoje, (3) nagrinėjant strateginius dokumentus, nustatyti piliečių įtraukimą visuotinės gynybos principo įgyvendinime Lietuvoje ir (4) nustatyti piliečių įtraukimo į visuotinės gynybos įgyvendinimą Lietuvoje pažangą. Projekte naudota kokybinė tyrimo metodika, kurią sudarė sisteminė Šiaurės šalių ir Šveicarijos gynybos politikos literatūros apžvalga ir Lietuvos piliečių įtraukimo į gynybos politiką įgyvendinant teisinės aplinkos kontekstinė analizė. Be to, antriniai duomenys iš metinių vyriausybinių ataskaitų ir gyventojų apklausų buvo panaudoti siekiant papildyti įžvalgas gautas atlikus aštuonis interviu su ekspertais. Pagrindinės tyrimo išvados atskleidžia, kad Lietuva savo piliečius integravo į krašto apsaugą per visuotinės gynybos principą dabartiniame politiniame kontekste. Lietuva ėmėsi priemonių, panašių į Šiaurės šalių ir Šveicarijos pavyzdžius, ir sprendė nacionalinius iššūkius stiprindama bendrą gynybos poziciją, padidindama gyventojų atsparumą ir atgrasydama galimą priešą. Atlikta teorinė apžvalga parodė, kad visuotinės gynybos taikymas ir dėmesys piliečių įtraukimui suteikia jiems rolę šalies gynyboje ir užtikrina kolektyvinį pasirengimą pilietiniam pasipriešinimui taikos metu. Ne mažiau svarbu yra apibrėžti piliečių vaidmenį ir jų įtraukimą į šalių normatyvinius ir strateginius dokumentus, tačiau, kaip rodo tyrimas, atsiranda iššūkiai susiję su etninių mažumų grupių įtraukimu į atsparumo stiprinimą ir šių piliečių rengimą pilietiniam pasipriešinimui. Nors įgyvendinant Strategiją svarbu apibrėžti ir ministerijų bei organizacijų, tokių kaip Lietuvos šaulių sąjunga (LŠS) vaidmenis, projekte teigiama, kad itin svarbu įdarbinti pilietinės visuomenės organizacijas, ypač, nevyriausybines organizacijas

(NVO), kurios taip pat ugdo ir rengia piliečius pilietiniam pasipriešinimui. NVO įtraukimas į Strategijos įgyvendinimą gali užpildyti personalo trūkumą, kurį patiria Mobilizacijos ir pilietinio pasipriešinimo departamentas (MPPD) ir LŠS. Nepaisant to, Lietuva demonstruoja įsipareigojimą ir pažangą įgyvendinant Lietuvos Respublikos piliečių rengimo pilietiniam pasipriešinimui strategiją, tačiau pasirodo, kad Strategijos įgyvendinimas daugiausia orientuotas į Krašto apsaugos ministeriją ir LŠS. Kita vertus, kitoms institucijoms, tokioms kaip Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija (SOCMIN), trūksta dėmesio ir finansavimo didinant gyventojų dalyvavimą savanoriškoje ir bendruomeninių ryšių veikloje, kuri labai prisideda prie šalies atsparumo stiprinimo, todėl reikia skirti išteklių ir kitoms ministerijoms atlikti savo tikslus įgyvendinant Strategiją ir įtraukti NVO, kurios padėtų SOCMIN pasiekti savo tikslus. Lietuvai išsprendus minėtus iššūkius, ji galėtų tapti pavyzdžiu kitoms Europos šalims, kurios siekia įtraukti savo piliečius į krašto apsaugą, taikydamos visuotinės gynybos principą. Projektą sudaro 63 puslapiai, 15 lentelių, 13 paveikslų ir du priedai. Projekte buvo panaudoti 49 mokslinės literatūros bei 35 informaciniai šaltiniai.

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List of abbreviations

CMC – Crisis Management Centre
EU – European Union
LRU – Lithuanian Riflemen's Union
MCRD – Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department
MINDEF – Ministry of National Defence
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO – non-governmental organisation
SBGS – State Border Guard Service
SOCMIN – Ministry of Social Protection and Labour

Introduction

In contemporary world, territorial security and protection of sovereignty is an ever more present topic for many countries today, therefore, a revision of defence policies is reviving among European states. Besides relaying on the participation in various alliances such as the European Union (EU) and NATO, a popular defence approach that has been incorporated among several countries, is the principle of total defence (Lamoreaux & Galbreath, 2008). Total defence encompasses whole-of-society approach, meaning that the country does not only rely on its armed forces but rather on its all sectors, including its citizens (Chenoweth, 2021). The application of total defence in one's defence system targets to incorporate civil government and citizens into defence and go hand in hand with military and armed forces when defending the country. In literature, a few scholars write about the application of total defence in Europe, especially in the Nordic countries and Switzerland in the era of Cold War. Mendershausen (1980) depicts Switzerland as a great example of the country using total defence to organise its defence strategy. The author argues that such approach of incorporating all sectors of the country should signal aggressors that the country is prepared to withstand aggression as the whole society and especially citizens will be mobilised. Moreover, Wither (2020) writes that Norway put great attention to all sectors of the country to prepare the society to withstand possible aggression by uptraining the population to protect critical infrastructure in times of stress and that citizens are prepared for civil resistance. While literature on total defence in Europe is abundant, particularly regarding the Nordic countries and Switzerland, this research focuses on Lithuania's unique experience and citizen role in the implementation of total defence through preparing the citizens for civil resistance.

Civil resistance is widely present in literature and many scholars write about citizen role in civil resistance in Nordic countries and Switzerland. Sharp (2008) points that civil resistance is a cornerstone of total defence and expand on the idea that citizens should know their role already in peacetime of how to act when the unfortunate happens. While Sharp (2008) depicts that civil resistance may take a form of passive resistance or in other words non-violent actions, when civilians involve themselves in activities such as spread of propaganda against the enemy or organising strikes, other authors, namely, Flanagan, Osburg, Binnendijk, Kepe, and Radin (2019) stress the importance of armed civilian resistance when citizens commit high-risk tasks or support military resistance groups. The mentioned authors together with Mankevičius & Daugirdas (2002) argue that building nationwide resilience through citizen preparedness for civil resistance is a key to a successful defence model. Additionally, Stringer (2017) writes about civil preparedness and the importance of building the resilience to first deter the aggressor and in times of invasion to effectively withstand it.

Relevance. This project primarily focuses on Lithuania's approach to the principle of total defence and the role of citizens in the implementation of it as the country went through recent changes in its national defence. It was shaped by being a young democracy that broke off from the Soviet Union and later by joining military and supranational alliances such as NATO and the EU (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020). There are scholars who research the change of Lithuanian foreign and national defence policies, among them, Janeliūnas (2021) who depicts Lithuania's appearance in the international arena during the time when the country was led by President Dalia Grybauskaitė when she distanced the country from eastern influences like the aggressor Russia and established strategic partnerships with Euro-Atlantic allies by securing Lithuania to have a strong support to operate independently. While military and armed forces play a critical role in nation's defence capabilities, more and more attention is brought to citizen involvement in defence policies through civil preparedness for civil resistance as it is equally essential when portraying oneself as a strong and

resilient country which is ready to effectively defend its sovereignty (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022). While there has been some research on civil-military relations and the principle of total defence where authors revolve around the same idea that Lithuania needs to change its defence strategy in the face of emerging threats from the east (Thornton & Karagiannis, 2016; Veebel & Ploom, 2019; Wither, 2020; Ericson et al., 2022; Rogulis, 2023) this project will provide a thorough analysis of how citizens are involved through the implementation of total defence. Many authors write about total defence in Lithuania and how the country is taking the example from its Nordic partners, therefore, the purpose of this research is to reveal the role of citizens in Lithuania's total defence and what measures the legislative and executive government branches took to improve Lithuania's defence posture when it comes to citizens defending their country.

However, there is a gap in understanding how Lithuania actively engages citizens in implementing defence policies through both military and non-military activities. Therefore, this research tries to fill in the gap by focusing on and analysing Lithuania's efforts to include the citizens in the implementation of defence policy as the country too applies total defence principle which relies on the inclusion of citizens (Veebel, Ploom, Vihmand, & Zaleski, 2020). Based on literature review which provides a foundation for contextual analysis, it was essential to identify how practices from the Nordics and Switzerland transcend to Lithuania. The contextual analysis provides necessary background and theoretical framework in the current geopolitical climate for how Lithuania is implementing new strategies of citizen involvement in the implementation of defence policy.

Novelty. This research aims to make a valuable contribution to the existing literature on Lithuanian defence policy and explore an under-researched theme of citizen role when implementing total defence principle in Lithuania. The literature is abundant with information about total defence and civil preparedness in European countries such as the Nordics and Switzerland, however, this research finds that Lithuania goes through changes in its defence policy. In 2022, Lithuania ratified the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance, which aims to prepare the nation for armed and non-violent civil resistance. Therefore, this research explores the cornerstone of total defence i.e. the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle and their preparedness for civil resistance in Lithuania. The topic of the research signifies novelty because it focuses on the specific role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania in face of emerging threats. The performed research demonstrates novelty due its approach to define the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania through scrutinising and analysing the Strategy and at the same time identifying the progress so far using secondary data together with opinions of people working with the implementation of the Strategy.

Research problem. The development and challenges of the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania

Research object. The role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania.

Research aim. To evaluate the involvement of citizens and define the progress of civil resistance strategy in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania.

Research objectives:

1. To analyse a theoretical framework of the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle.
2. To explore the context and the legal environment of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania.

3. To define the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania based on strategic documents.
4. To identify the progress of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania.

Research methods. To achieve the research objectives qualitative research methodology was used. The project aims to uncover insights that cannot be captured through quantitative data. As usual for the qualitative study, a non-linear research path was adopted throughout the search of needed sources which provided the opportunity to immerse into the abundancy of academic books, journals and articles, governmental websites and their publications, and remain flexible of what to use for this research (Neuman, 2014). A systematic literature review of defence policy in Nordic countries and Switzerland was performed together with the context analysis of Lithuania to evaluate the existing knowledge on the role of citizens as the key component of total defence principle. The research incorporated the analysis of normative and strategic documents on the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle. To complement the research, analysis of secondary data was performed which included public opinion surveys and governmental reports. Additionally, eight interviews with subject matter experts were conducted who provided qualitative insights on the defence policy of Lithuania and citizen involvement. Such qualitative study approach of the selected topic enabled deeper understanding aiming to explore the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania and the progress of implementing the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance.

Structure of the project. Introduction. Theoretical framework of citizen role within total defence. Context analysis of citizen role in Lithuania's defence policy. Analysis of citizen involvement in Lithuania's total defence principle. Conclusion. List of references. List of information sources. The project used 49 sources of scientific literature and 35 information sources.

1. Theoretical framework of citizen role within total defence

To begin with, defence policy is in essence a public policy formulated and implemented by the government to address the needs of the defence sector, guided by the government's political agenda (Neill, Taliaferro, Tillman, Morgan, & Hinkle, 2017). The needs of the defence sector are shaped by the national policy, which in fact reflects the interests of citizens. In democratic orders, the citizens indirectly influence defence policy by electing experts and leaders who are empowered to shape and execute it. Neill et al. (2017) argue that the effectiveness of a defence policy largely depends on who holds the authority and responsibility for its creation and implementation. In democracies, this responsibility typically lies with civilian governments or specific ministries, such as the Ministry of Defence. In times when geopolitical climate starts changing, countries begin to pay more attention to their security and defence capabilities. This chapter addresses the theoretical context of citizen involvement in total defence implementation. Considering the aggressive neighbour of the Nordic countries, it is a strategic move to employ total defence principle to assure the security of the region. In the reflection of such background, the following sections will analyse how Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland shape their defence policies by applying or reapplying the principle of total defence, then it will compare how the Nordics and Switzerland define citizen role in defence policy implementation through preparing citizens for civil resistance.

1.1. Implementation of total defence in Europe

It is evident that the discussion of Europe's security and defence policy among national governments is increasing. Nowadays, countries in Europe are reviewing their defence policies and revisiting the application of total defence as it is a comprehensive approach that incorporates every sector of the country, such as, military, civil government, civil and non-governmental organisations, private sector into the implementation of the defence policy and even foresees the role of citizens in it (Wither, 2020, p. 62). Incorporating these sectors in the defence policy means moving away from a traditional understanding of defence and reliance on solely military forces and instead, the principle of total defence shifts the responsibility for defending the country to everyone, not just the military. Total defence is also referred as universal or comprehensive defence depending on where it is implemented (Berndtsson, 2024), and no matter which term is used, they both encompass the same principle. The principle of total defence is incorporating military capabilities with the role of citizens and other mentioned sectors into the implementation of defence policy to prepare the whole society for a variety of crises and emergencies that can include both military and non-military threats (Berzina, 2020). When it comes to total defence and its application, literature provides examples that some countries in Europe are already using the principle of total defence (Ericson, Svenbro, & Wester, 2022; Valtonen & Branders, 2020; Veebel & Ploom, 2019) or some are introducing the principle of total defence into their defence policies (Berzina, 2020; Grigalashvili, 2023; Rogulis, 2024; Veebel & Ploom, 2019; Wither, 2020).

To explore the principle of total defence, there are several scientific works that talk about the history of total defence (Mendershausen, 1980; Veebel & Ploom, 2019) where the concept is explored from the Cold War era when total defence was especially vital in a few non-aligned European countries, namely, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. According to Mendershausen (1980), the comprehensive approach of total defence assures that the country is prepared at all levels, which demonstrates country's strong resilience. The author notes that Norway and Switzerland are examples of countries that have developed and implemented total defence principle, with a purpose to integrate and define citizen involvement in defence policy implementation. The mentioned countries were

prioritising territorial defence together with civil resistance mechanisms with latter being one of the crucial roles of the citizens. The report states that the combination of military and civil resistance is a strong political rather than organisational aspect because it employs multiple country sectors into one defence entity, for example, Norway and Switzerland integrated military and non-military sectors like economic, industrial and social to enhance defence efforts, to be fully prepared to sustain themselves in the event of an attack. He adds that if military or armed forces are ready to defend the territory of the country, the role of citizens at the same time must be to resist the invasion. This signifies the importance of total defence and that it was rather powerful in times of unrest in Europe during the Cold War and that countries equipped their all sectors to stay resilient and prepared for a possible aggression (Mendershausen, 1980).

To illustrate the changing dynamics among European countries, it is seen that since Russia took aggressive actions in Ukraine in 2014, this factor contributed to governments around Europe to review their defence policies and suspend their communication and cooperation with Russia. The diminished communication with Russia led to increased tensions in the continent. Many countries in Europe who are members of NATO relied on collective defence. However, a few members started focusing on the reintroduction of total defence principle and its whole-of-society approach to their national defence. Research article by Berzina (2020) on comprehensive defence approach finds that the total defence principle compliments the collective defence and improves country's chances to defend itself in face of aggression. The author adds that NATO and EU members who incorporate the efforts of total defence promote national and international cooperation and ensure greater preparedness for emergencies, conventional and unconventional threats (Berzina, 2020).

Subsequentially, when it comes to the unconventional warfare, Wither (2020) in his article on total defence argues that after Russia's aggression in Ukraine, Western countries and Russia employed political warfare as means to achieve their national objects with one another via the use of various strategies such as provocations with military tactics, use of intelligence operations, diplomatic efforts and lastly economic measures such as sanctions. He depicts those countries tried to achieve political and strategic goals without sparking a conventional warfare between each other and that such strategies blurred any lines between peace and conflict and involved attempts to destabilise each other. The attempts of destabilisation of Western countries motivated to review their defence policies quicker and instead of solely relying on armed forces to defend their territories, and collective security, they started organising the employment of all sectors including their citizens into national defence policies with a purpose to deter and defeat possible aggression. For this day, Nordic countries have started enhancing their defence models by applying the principle of total defence. Wither (2020) argues that Nordics aim to employ all sectors to best protect themselves and deter any possible aggression. Total defence integrates defence efforts of military, civil resistance, civil government, private sector and NGOs to achieve a comprehensive and effective defence concept. The application of total defence as the main defence model prepares the whole country to repel possible threats and aggression, builds resilience and strengthens territorial defence.

Furthermore, another example of total defence principle and the incorporation of it into national defence strategy is Sweden. Although Sweden had suspended total defence from 2010, the country decided to reintroduce it in response to the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. In their report on total defence, Ericson, Svenbro, and Wester (2022) depict that Sweden now uses the combination of military resistance with other sectors in its defence policy. According to the Swedish government, Sweden will complete the implementation of its total defence strategy until 2025 (Government Offices of Sweden, 2024). The reports by Ericson, Svenbro, and

Wester (2022) and Berndtsson (2024) state that total defence principle in Sweden too involves the integration of military resistance with the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civilian preparedness for civil resistance to protect the whole country during crises or wartime. Furthermore, the authors elaborate that the principle of total defence should boost the morale of civilian authorities, NGOs, businesses and all citizens and improve overall resilience, so the country could withstand war situations and maintain critical societal functions during a conflict (Berndtsson, 2024; Ericson, Svenbro, & Wester, 2022). Total defence in this instance, aims to prepare all sectors of the country. The preparedness assures that the whole country together with its all sectors can resist and that everyone will have a strong sense to defend their country in times of war.

With regard to the above examples, by adopting the principle of total defence, countries in theory put a strong accent on strengthening their capabilities with a purpose to defend themselves and by no means imply that they prepare to attack others, although they have the needed tools to do so (Mendershausen, 1980, p. 4). In practice, incorporating all sectors of the country and especially to promote the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy aims to mobilise the whole nation, deter any potential aggressor and for the aggressor to reconsider its attack as it may be too costly or challenging (Stringer, 2017; Wither, 2020). As mentioned before, the principle of total defence stresses the importance of incorporating all sectors of the country to national security. The implementation of total defence principle in the country's defence policy shows that the national defence is no longer reliant on its military capabilities but rather requires the active participation of its citizens, civil organisations, and private sector. To visualise the interconnectedness of the mentioned sectors within a country, Figure 1 illustrates the key components of total defence.

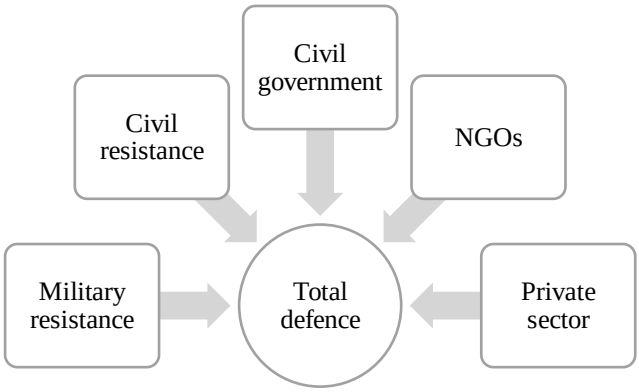

Fig. 1. Components of total defence (Information retrieved from Wither, 2020; Berzina 2020; Ericson et al. 2022).

In short, as the previous paragraphs suggest, total defence principle is a very important tool that employs many sectors of one country to improve defence capabilities. The integration of multiple sectors into one unified defence mechanism aims to strengthen the country by developing its resistance capabilities and improve overall resilience to withstand aggression.

1.2. Citizen involvement to defence capabilities

Another essential point of total defence is its two main pillars, namely, resistance and resilience, where resistance is defined by the willingness of people to defend their country and resilience is portraying the preparedness and readiness of the country to withstand a period of crisis and maintain the core functions of the country (Grigalashvili, 2023). Therefore, the following section will explore civil resistance as the key component of total defence principle and resilience to prepare the country

for the unexpected. Countries in Europe are shifting from solely military defence to the inclusion of other actors in their defence strategies by applying the principle of total defence. A very significant element of total defence principle is civil resistance that many countries are enhancing and employing to define citizen role in defence policy implementation and better prepare their citizens for the unexpected aggression.

For that reason, civil resistance is a form of collective action that is used by civilians in application of non-violent, peaceful means to challenge the current status-quo, protest certain policies or unwanted and aggressive regimes and clearly defines the role of citizens when it comes to the implementation of total defence principle. The term itself is not new and has been in use since the protest of Mahatma Gandhi against the British colonialist regime in India (Chenoweth, 2021). Civil resistance is a method in which citizens express their dissatisfaction against the opponent without posing harm or threat. The purpose of such form of resistance is to promote conflict and employ masses of people to collectively confront the enemy or opponent and address the injustice. Civil resistance is a crucial element in the principle of total defence as it enables the population to directly engage in defending their country (Chenoweth, 2021). Civil resistance provides the country with a major resource when it comes to defending the homeland and is an alternative to the military defence. It has gained popularity as a way to challenge injustice, oppression, and foreign rule, offering an alternative to the violent liberation movements of the past. Commonly, the history of civil resistance is studied by many scholars and among them, Michael Randle (1993) in his report on civil resistance scrutinises this form of resistance by dwelling into several cases studies. The history of Europe serves a few examples of civil resistance where non-violent actions were applied by citizens to resist the enemy, first in Czechoslovakia in 1968 better known as Prague Spring where citizens protested against Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops, then the Baltic Way in 1989 where a peaceful pro-independence citizen demonstration took place in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and eventually the fall of Berlin Wall in 1989 where Peaceful Revolution was used to deconstruct the Wall (Randle, 1993). The role of citizens within defence policy was evident especially when it came to civil resistance as this demonstrated a safer and more convenient alternative to the conventional war which was too destructive. Moreover, civil resistance can be organised and coordinated by the civil government. It is important to prepare the citizens in peacetime to prevent any panic and stress in times of unrest. Preparing and training the society for civil resistance provides the knowledge to citizens on how to best resist the occupier, which can buy time for other resistance groups like military. Well prepared citizens can contribute to military by employing civil resistance techniques and assure the effectiveness of military groups in resisting the enemy on the front line. Another way when well-prepared citizens and civil resistance can help military resistance groups is when citizens logistically support the military with actions of providing food which ought to have been stockpiled individually in each household, accommodate the military with shelter and any useful information that citizens may have obtained about the enemy. Civil resistance as the element of the principle of total defence is discussed by Mendershausen. In his report on territorial defence (1980) the author elaborates how Norway, Sweden and Switzerland employed their citizens in defence policies during Cold War. Such involvement consisted of training the civilian population to help protect their communities and keep crucial services running by knowing how resist the enemy (Mendershausen, 1980). Elaborate civil resistance strategies can play a critical role in building citizen resilience, deterring enemies and helping the military resistance groups to perform their duties better (Lane, 1997).

Moreover, NATO members among Europe are re-evaluating their defence strengths and weaknesses and identifying how best they could defend themselves from modern threats. Many members are concentrating on citizen role within defence policy and putting more focus to civil preparedness and national resilience by improving their deterrence and investing in their defence capabilities (Veebel, 2018; Roepke & Thankey, 2024). Policies around total defence aim for countries to be prepared for conventional military actions, irregular warfare and as well to involve civil resistance mechanisms to mitigate any potential occupant's progress within the country. The resilience of NATO members was addressed in 2016 Warsaw Summit in which the participants drafted seven baseline requirements to measure their preparedness. The identified requirements are as follows: (1) to assure the continuity of government, (2) to ensure energy supply, (3) to be able to manage uncontrolled movement of people, (4) to ensure food and water resources, (5) to have the ability to deal with mass casualties in disrupted health services, (6) to achieve resilient civil communication systems and (7) build resilient transportation systems for NATO and civilian services (NATO, 2024). Resilient society can be less prone to conventional violent acts and non-violent acts such as hybrid attacks, external propaganda prior and during physical aggression. In literature, Stringer (2017), Roepke & Thankey (2024) and Wither (2020) emphasise resilience as a cornerstone of total defence, especially when it comes to civil resistance. Resilience is defined by citizens' capacity to resist and revive from diverse shocks and is complemented by territorial defence strategies aimed at preventing aggressor's ambitions. Having prepared citizens for civil resistance is essential for small states and nations (Mankevičius & Daugirdas, 2002). Resilience not only applies to citizens, but it transcends to the whole country. Wither (2020) illustrates Finland as an exceptional example of a resilient society to countries in Europe. Finland is ready to counter any possible disruptions on its critical infrastructure in the event of a crisis as it employs citizen resistance groups to protect its infrastructure. In addition to that, the country demonstrates proper preparedness when it comes to shelters, where everyone can hide. The country also pays great attention to stockpiling food products and fuel which can be helpful when helping other civilians, neighbours etc. and assisting military resistance groups in need. Finland showcases a successful initiative of civil preparedness called the "72-hour concept" in which the government authorities and NGOs provide the guidelines for civilians on how to best prepare for a potential 72-hour period of no state help (Valtonen & Branders, 2020). The civil resistance in Finland and civil preparedness to defend their homeland was born already in Winter War where Valtonen and Branders (2020) argue that the success of resisting the Soviets came from the unification Finnish people and elimination of any possible division between the nation.

Equally important, from the north to the centre of Europe, Stringer (2017) expands on the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Switzerland. Switzerland built resilience against any form of aggression, by mobilising the whole society rather than just the military. The author adds that resilience was built by preparing all sectors of Switzerland, namely, psychological and civil defence. He seconds that stockpiling food, and other materials made the country ready to encounter any possible aggression and resist occupation while psychological resilience was achieved through national pride, education and objective national news service which all helped to diminish any possible effects of propaganda. It has been shown, that by clearly defining the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance mechanisms, both Finland and Switzerland built resilience within the society and presented themselves as indigestible targets which in result deters any possible aggression. Additionally, the presented example of Switzerland by Menderhausen (1980) depicts that the Swiss total defence principle serves as a historical example of

how small states can prepare for defence by using civil resistance, even when faced with a larger enemy.

To continue with civil resistance and the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle, there are a few outlined actions that citizens may take upon to resist the enemy. The role of citizens is evident when it comes to non-violent actions performed in civil resistance as they aim to gather and unite a large mass of people despite their differences into one entity who face the same struggle (Dudouet & Clark, 2009). The literature shows that there are multiple factors that explain the effectiveness of civil resistance when applying non-violent actions rather than using armed response. In their report on civil resistance Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) indicate that non-violent actions such as citizen movements can generate domestic and international support and mobilise more people to participate in collective resistance against the enemy which in result puts more pressure on the opponent. When employing non-violent actions in civil resistance, the repressor finds it harder to justify their armed actions and it may fail to apply any other instruments to maintain its oppressing power (Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008). In essence, the citizen role in the implementation of total defence principle through civil resistance shows superiority when it comes to non-violent actions, as such actions succeed in mobilising masses of people who are of the same morale to resist and defend their country. Non-violent civil resistance defines the role of citizens in the implementation of the defence policy as it consists of non-violent actions that can be performed by citizens to achieve their objectives and liberate themselves from oppressive regimes of the enemy.

Likewise, citizen involvement in defence policy serves a purpose as the employment of non-violent actions empowers citizens to resist without using physical power or in other words to resist in a peaceful way without employing physical violence (Sharp, 2012). There are several studies and scientific articles that explore civil resistance and its strategies, among them the report on civil resistance by Flanagan et al. (2019) where it is pointed that the involvement of citizens, civilian government and NGOs in defence policies aids military, paramilitary forces, and police in committing collective action to safeguard national security. Citizens can perform a variety of actions that help the country overall by resisting the opponent and at the same time assisting the military resistance groups. The role of citizens within the principle of total defence especially during civil resistance is to employ low-profile activities which are discussed in research by Sharp (2008) on non-violent action where the author writes about a non-violent defence mechanism which relies heavily on the active participation of citizens in other words it is non-armed or non-violent civil resistance. The role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle is critical when it comes to non-violent resistance against occupiers and invaders. Citizens can take part in actions such as boycotts and civil disobedience, where they withdraw their cooperation from oppressive regimes, thereby weakening the aggressor's control over society (Sharp, 2008). Citizen role is further highlighted by Sharp, who explains that civil resistance can deter the enemy through three key non-violent actions: acts of omission, acts of commission, and a combination of both. Such actions are used when previous measures such as diplomatic efforts or negotiations fail or are impossible to implement. Acts of omission are performed by citizens where they disagree to perform on what is required by the invader, acts of commission are employed by citizens when they perform acts that are not allowed (Sharp, 2008). Citizens must acquire non-armed resistance skills for instance organising civil disobedience or information resilience. The role of citizens through these non-violent actions is crucial for mobilising the society into a unified resistance force as active citizen participation is essential for the success of civil resistance. The participation of citizens determines whether non-violent actions will

be effective. If citizens know their role, they can then effectively respond to mobilisation and perform the non-violent acts and in such way, they collectively weaken the oppressor.

In addition to that, citizen involvement through the principle of total defence is it too discussed by Osburg (2016) in his report on unconventional defence where he elaborates on *passive resistance* as an integral part of the civil resistance strategy. The author emphasises that the role of citizens in the defence policy is outlined specifically by participation in passive resistance activities which fall under non-violent civil resistance contributing both morally and occasionally in practical ways. Such activities include non-cooperation with the invader, spreading information, or subtle forms of defiance against the occupiers, organising boycotts and other low-profile activities such as providing moral support, intelligence, and logistical help to active resistance units which all are crucial to the overall effort to resist occupation and preserve national freedom. The author implies that passive resistance is less dangerous and less visible than military resistance but still essential in sustaining the morale of resisters and the broader population (Osburg, 2016).

Moreover, another research by Flanagan et al. (2019) second to the idea that the role of citizens to employ non-violent acts is critical. The report adds that non-violent civil resistance can strengthen deterrence and support conventional defence mechanisms, and the citizens can engage in non-violent resistance through actions such as disseminating anti-occupation propaganda via social media, organising strikes, protests, and acts of civil disobedience, or practicing non-cooperation with the enemy (Flanagan et al. 2019). These measures not only disrupt the occupier's control but also help maintain national morale and demonstrate resilience, both internally and externally. To illustrate the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance and the mentioned non-violent actions better, Figure 2 demonstrates the interconnectedness of the non-violent actions with acts of omission and acts of commission which can be used during non-violent civil resistance to effectively deter aggression, prevent the occupying forces in progressing within the country and preserve the national freedom.

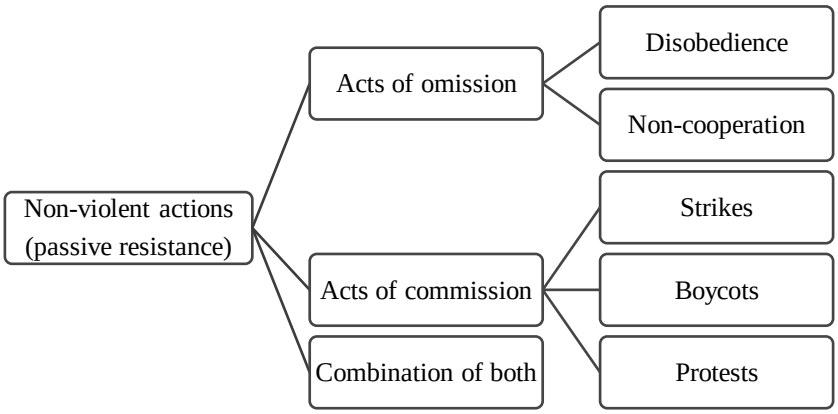

Fig. 2. Non-violent actions performed during passive civil resistance (Information retrieved from Sharp 2008; Osburg, 2016; Flanagan et al. 2019).

To sum up, the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle is crucial when employing non-violent actions during civil resistance as citizens are a large and significant component of the resisting power against aggression or occupation. Through various actions of passive resistance, such as strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience citizens perform effective and powerful techniques that weaken oppressor's control, maintain national morale, and support military resistance efforts.

1.3. Citizen role in the implementation of total defence principle

It is essential to consider how civil resistance strategies equip citizens to respond effectively during crises. As crucial part of total defence principle, civil resistance and its strategies should prepare citizens to effectively respond when the unexpected happens. The role of citizens in the implementation of total defence is vital in ensuring that the government can continue functioning during an attack, essential services remain operating, and there is civil support to military operations (NATO, 2024). Both the country and its citizens must be equipped with necessary knowledge on how to engage in the variety of defence operations, whether armed or non-violent. Civil resistance strategies should emphasise the role of citizens within country's defence policy, providing them with the skills and knowledge needed on how to support the country's infrastructure an attack in times of conflict. For example, citizens should know how to contribute to restoring electricity, assisting with transportation, and supporting the healthcare efforts in times of waged war. NATO Article 3 elaborates on civil preparedness, particularly in the context of civil resistance, that is critical and is a national responsibility. When the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle is fully realised, it strengthens the collective resilience of all member states (NATO, 2023).

To evaluate the effectiveness and application of civil preparedness and civil resistance, the literature provides the example of Switzerland, which demonstrated great preparedness during the Cold War. The role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle was evident as the preparation for civil resistance was taken seriously. Firstly, each Swiss household knew where exactly to evacuate if faced with danger and secondly, each household was equipped with a ready-to-go emergency kit for unexpected events (Mendershausen, 1980). Such preparation equipped the citizens with essential knowledge and resources on how and where to evacuate and helped the whole country become ready to resist a potential invasion, in result contributing to national security by ensuring that more citizens could be protected in the fighting front was brought to urban areas or inhabited establishments. As demonstrated by Stringer (2017), his article about civil resistance in Switzerland too emphasises the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy during the Cold War, highlighting Switzerland's whole-of-society defence approach. Swiss citizens played a crucial role in civil resistance in Swiss towns and cities because it was present in a form of passive resistance to remain undetected. The citizens were carrying out low-risk activities such as intelligence gathering, hiding military supplies or fighters themselves. To continue, the citizens were trained to refuse any cooperation with the aggressors, were trained to engage in non-violent civil resistance actions, including spreading disinformation, propaganda, and sabotaging enemy supply lines (Stringer, 2017). The mentioned efforts demonstrate the importance of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy and how it was present in Swiss national strategy, as the country prepared itself for potential attacks from Soviet or Warsaw Pact members.

In addition to that, defence in Switzerland was never just a military affair because it was neutral and the country did not have any allies, therefore it had to prepare for defending itself from a possible' attack. Stringer (2017) argues that Switzerland integrated the role of citizens cultivating civic responsibility and the will to be part of national security. It is argued, citizens are an integral part of total defence and that such inclusive approach may build a resilient society which in the event of occupation would resume their resistance in the occupied parts of the country (Stringer, 2017). Civil resistance is also called underground resistance as civilians were expected to resist in small groups of trusted people to remain undetected and eliminate the risk of traitor infiltration. Underground resistance was to operate low-profile activities which were less dangerous and reduced the risk of exposure. Civil resistance should work hand in hand with military resistance in urban areas as the

collaboration between the underground civil and military resistance groups would enable the military with civilians' input such as logistical support and intelligence. Such tandem is believed to promote effectiveness of resistance. Although, some civil resistance groups were trained to perform high risk activities which were to use according to military instructions and were more aggressive (Stringer, 2017).

Ultimately, the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Switzerland was critical when it came to deterring external aggression. The whole-of-society approach and shared commitment to defend their homeland made Switzerland unattractive for invasion, which provided the country with power of a well-prepared, civilian-backed defence strategy. To summarise the ideas of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance activities in Switzerland, Table 1 lists and explains the meaning of low-profile and high-risk activities which Swiss civil resistance groups were trained to perform.

Table 1. Civil resistance activities (Information retrieved from Osburg 2016; Sharp 2008; Stringer, 2017).

Low-profile activities	**High risk activities**
Providing intelligence to military resistance groups	Sabotaging enemy infrastructure
Accommodating military resistance groups with shelter and weapons	Falsifying documents to confuse the enemy
Engaging in passive resistance (documenting enemy actions, spreading propaganda about the enemy)	Identifying traitors and collaborators in the proximity
Participating in non-violent resistance like non-cooperation	Attacks on enemy personnel and collaborators

On the other hand, while Switzerland employs a comprehensive approach in its defence policy by incorporating low-profile activities through civil resistance, citizen role in defence policy implementation in Norway focuses on the protection of its critical infrastructure through civil resistance. To respond to the aggressor and protect the critical infrastructure for the country to resume its vital functions, civil resistance in Norway is employed by training the Norwegian citizens to protect the key infrastructure and how to contribute to keep it running. Mendershausen (1980) and Wither (2020) elaborate on the training programmes that are designed, and which assure that citizens are ready to protect Norwegian infrastructure. The protection of infrastructure assures that the food supply and water supply does not stop within the country, transportation can continue to serve the nation, and the healthcare system could continue functioning and treating any casualties. In addition to that, clearly defined role of the Norwegian citizens in the implementation of defence policy made them aware of and well prepared to resist an aggressor by employing non-violent actions, such as, civil disobedience, organisation of peaceful protests and other means that could prevent the enemy from progressing within the country. The focus on the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence through civil preparedness for civil resistance and assistance in protecting the country's infrastructre provides an example of a unique national defence model where citizens are a key figure withing the defence policy.

Frizzelle, Garey, & Kulalic (2022) argue that much important is also the development and strengthening of resilience of the population and the country as a whole which helps to withstand a possible attack from the enemy and sustain oneself to continue functioning as a state. A way to build population resilience, countries can establish strategies to prepare the citizens to actively participate in the implementation of defence policy. To illustrate the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance training in Norway from the Cold War era, Table 2 portrays

specific training categories with actions that Norway has implemented to achieve a successful and effective civil resistance.

Table 2. Civil resistance training steps and meanings (Information retrieved from Mendershausen, 1980).

Steps to enable civil resistance	**Definition of the steps**
Prepare civil defence programmes	Training for emergencies including evacuating people, helping to build shelters, manage food supplies
Improve psychological preparedness	Educating citizens about the importance of their participation in country's defence mechanism both mentally and physically
Draft infrastructure defence	Training to protect critical infrastructure such as water reservoirs, electricity plants, hospitals
Training on resistance	Training to perform underground resistance, nonviolent actions, communication spread aiding military to counterattack

The inclusion of citizens in defence policy through the preparation for civil resistance indicates the belief that a motivated civilian population can serve as an effective deterrent to potential aggressors (Colby & Solomon, 2015). Citizen involvement is essential, as civil resistance and the preparation of the population during peacetime provide the assurance that the country can respond to crises effectively. A well-trained society, equipped with knowledge and skills, can resist more effectively and avoid unnecessary panic when confronted with aggression. Providing more information to citizens on their role on how to act on day X, is a practical measure that encourages active citizen involvement in the planning and execution of national defence policy. This builds resilience by ensuring that citizens are psychologically and practically ready to support their country when the unexpected arrives. The role of citizens in the implementation of total defence is not just about preparedness but also about the creation of duty and participation in national security. A well-prepared and trained population is ready to resist effectively, which makes it harder for the invader to take advantage and progress with the country, as citizens are equipped with essential skills and necessary knowledge to resist occupation. In the event of an emergency, the state relies on civil resistance to disrupt aggressor's plans. A well-prepared population can assist in various ways like knowing how to evacuate, providing help to those in need, and protecting critical infrastructure. By having the proper training through which the role of citizens is clearly defined, the citizens can help ensure that essential services continue functioning amidst an attack.

Eventually, the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle through civil resistance complements military efforts by eliminating the load from armed forces. In such way, armed forces can perform better as citizens are already trained how to evacuate in the emergency, how to assist to those in need and help the military in many other ways. When civilians are prepared to endure the first days of an attack, they already contribute directly to the nation's ability to withstand aggression, ultimately showing that the role of citizens in defence policy ensures that a society remains strong, resilient, and capable of defending itself.

1.4. The importance of total defence principle and citizen involvement in Lithuania

Considering the previously discussed northern European countries, it can be concluded that Lithuania finds itself in the same geopolitical climate. Having Russia as an unpredictable neighbour in the east that occasionally performs cyber-attacks, wages war in other countries and in general spreads propaganda inside and outside Russia, makes the surrounding countries anxious of their security and national defence (Colby & Solomon, 2015; Thornton & Karagiannis, 2016). The Lithuanian defence

policy changed quite a lot over the years and a major shift in the foreign and defence policy appeared when the country was led by the President Dalia Grybauskaitė from 2009 to 2019. Article by Janeliūnas (2021) on Grybauskaitė's presidency states that President Grybauskaitė since the beginning of her term shifted from pure Atlanticism and sole reliance on NATO, to the more EU-centric foreign policy with a focus to defence by consolidating a strategic partnership with member countries of the EU. Additionally, the President Grybauskaitė vocalised Lithuania's aspiration to become more like the Nordics which according to her the Nordic countries were a great example to follow when it came to the defence policy. Next, the president distanced Lithuania from the relations with Russia and Belarus as the two did not appear to be nearly friendly and were a strong voice for sanctions towards Russia Švedkauskas (2023). Lastly, Grybauskaitė secured NATO to draw a defence plan for the Baltics as it was not on paper since beginning of the membership (Janeliūnas, 2021). It can be concluded, that during Grybauskaitė's term the defence policy of Lithuania became more assertive, and when looking at the NATO membership, the President Grybauskaitė put pressure on securing NATO commitments for the territorial safety of Lithuania.

Another essential point of the changing defence policy of Lithuania was the proximity to Russia. Lithuania together with Latvia and Estonia were and are Russia's targets of hybrid warfare. In their article on Russia's threat to the Baltic states Thornton & Karagiannis (2016) argue that if Russia succeeds in weakening the Baltic countries and creates great disorder among them, they will fail to respond as effective NATO allies, and it will make Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia as buffer states between NATO and Russia once again. However, literature already tells that Lithuania stands as a mutual respected partner of all NATO members and that the Baltic states secured the warranty of being protected due to the President Grybauskaitė being very vocal about Russia and its illegal actions of aggression in Georgia and Ukraine. Not only the President Grybauskaitė earned the respect of NATO members, but she too strengthened relationships with EU partners especially Germany as Germany became a key partner in both political and military cooperation (Janeliūnas, 2021; Park & Jakstaite-Confortola, 2021). In summary, the evolving defence policy of Lithuania signals a strong commitment to national security. The involvement of its citizens to the implementation of defence policy in the principle of total defence, builds Lithuania's defence capabilities. Former President Dalia Grybauskaitė and her leadership moved Lithuania towards assertive and EU-aligned defence strategy, strengthened ties with NATO and EU partners and made the country more resilient.

After examining the changing defence policy of Lithuania, the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania is equally important. The shift in Lithuanian defence policy is also discussed by Rogulis (2023) in his research on total defence in Lithuania, where it is found that since 2016 Lithuania updated its defence policy by implementing aspects of total defence which like in the Nordic countries, the main aim is to define the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy. The changing defence policy with the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania aims to incorporate the citizens, civil government and civil society with the military capabilities to prepare the whole country to collectively defend itself from a possible aggression, therefore, this section will discuss the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. In response to insecurity of Russia's actions, similarly as the Nordic neighbours, Lithuania implemented the principle of total defence to better prepare for unexpected threats or even invasion. The revival of total defence not only appointed more attention to the military capabilities, effectiveness of armed forces or even irregular warfare, but also focused on the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy, for example, through preparing the citizens for civil resistance (Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania, 2022). Total defence improves the resilience of a country and makes citizens

resilient too to withstand any unwanted actions from the enemy. Although Lithuania does not share a border with mainland Russia so to speak, it has however a border with Russia's exclave Kaliningrad. Lithuania has a history of being in the soviet influence zone and aggression in Ukraine in 2014 already triggered the country to take actions in improving its defence. As part of NATO and the EU, Lithuania should have assurance that in the event of invasion, its allies would help in defending it, however, instead of relying on NATO and the EU, Lithuania started transforming its territorial defence into total defence as an additional tool to be better prepared for possible aggression. Lithuania is actively seeking to deter any potential aggression, particularly from the east, by combining its membership in NATO, NATO's principle of collective defence with the implementation of total defence that employs all sectors of society in response to emerging threats. However, Heier (2024) questions whether such measures are sufficient to combat a giant such as Russia, who possesses substantial military advantage and is proficient in hybrid warfare tactics such as cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns with a purpose to destabilise the region. To better respond and enhance the resilience of citizens, Lithuania increasingly focused on preparing its citizens for civil resistance and in such way clearly defining the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy.

As literature tells, the principle of total defence consists of a wide range of efforts beyond traditional military strategies, extending to forms of psychological, economic, and civil resistance (Ericson et al., 2022; Rogulis, 2024; Veebel & Ploom, 2019). In the case of Lithuania, the country similarly to the Nordic partners integrates military resistance with the involvement of civil government, civil resistance and encourages the private sector and non-governmental organisations to participate as well. In theory, such collaborative network of support in multiple sectors should provide a guarantee that a well-coordinated and effective response can be executed in in case of external aggression. In retrospective, the principle of total defence in Lithuania shows that the country is committed in transforming its defence policy by incorporating all sectors of the country to prepare everyone to defend it. Defining the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy improves the overall resilience and assures that the country is heading towards a proper preparation to increase its defence capabilities.

2. Context analysis of citizen role in Lithuania's defence policy

As mentioned in the first chapter, a crucial part of total defence is the role of citizens and their involvement in defence policy through civil resistance. This project focuses on the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania, therefore, having the previous chapter defined the theoretical concept of the main theme, this chapter will essentially consist of the legal environment and practice of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. The following chapter will describe the total defence principle and how Lithuania is working on the involvement of its citizens to the national defence policy (Park & Paulionyte, 2016).

2.1. The legal environment defining citizen role within total defence in Lithuania

As literature provides numerous examples of the changing defence policy of Lithuania and the definition of the role of citizens in the implementation of it, this section will elaborate on the normative and strategic documents which define the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania. Each document will have a separate sub-section and some will contain tables to clearly portray and list the defined role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania.

The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. The main document that establishes the foundation of Lithuania and how the country is functioning is the Constitution. The Constitution also provides the role of citizens when it comes to the defence of Lithuania. In the Section I on Statehood of Lithuania, Article 3 depicts, each Lithuanian citizen has a duty to resist to anything that jeopardises the statehood of the country, its sovereignty and constitutional order (Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija, 2019). Furthermore, the Section XVIII on Foreign Policy and State Defence, Article 139 states that every citizen of the Republic has a right and duty to defend Lithuania from foreign armed aggression. The Article adds that laws define the role of citizens to complete military service or any other alternative service for country's defence (Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija, 2019).

Law on the Basics of National Security of the Republic of Lithuania. As the Constitution stated, laws define the further role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy. The Law on the Basics of National Security of the Republic of Lithuania (2024) (or Lietuvos Respublikos nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas in Lithuanian) in Article 1 escribes that the law creates the conditions for the nation (the citizens) to protect and defend Lithuania's independence, territorial integrity and the constitutional order. The Article 2 further adds that the citizens of Lithuania ensure the national security. Below, Table 3 will enlist important aspects related to the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy from the Law on the Basics of National Security and its Part I consisting of the main provisions and principles of national defence policy. Part 1 (Dalis in Lithuanian) consists of multiple Chapters (Skyrius in Lithuanian), which too are further expanded into Sections (Skirsniai in Lithuanian) ("Lietuvos Respublikos nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas," 2024).

Table 3. Overview of citizen role defined by the Law on the Basics of National Security (Information retrieved from "Lietuvos Respublikos nacionalinio saugumo pagrindų įstatymas," 2024).

Role of citizens	**Chapters**
National defence policy depends on active citizen participation with state institutions and civil society	Chapter 1 General provisions of the national security policy

Citizens protect national values and develop determination to defend Lithuania	Chapter 2 Main national security system elements Third section: Methods to ensure security
Citizens prepare themselves for civil resistance	
Citizens continue citizens' association activities	
Citizens exercise the constitutional right to defend the country from armed aggression	Chapter 6 Legal basis of Lithuania's defence
Citizens are free to resist the aggressor no matter the age or profession	Chapter 7 Crucial Lithuania's defence policy provisions
Citizens are familiar with civil-military relations and cooperation	First section: Total and unconditional defence
Citizens participate in non-violent and armed civil resistance	Second section: General defence provisions
Citizens refuse to collaborate, they disobey and sabotage the enemy	Fourth section: Civil resistance

National Security Strategy. The National Security Strategy (2021) (or *Nacionalinio saugumo strategija* in Lithuanian), Chapter 1 on general provisions foresees the most important provisions for a safe development of the Lithuanian state. Based on the Constitution of Lithuania, the Strategy founds national security interests, the main risks and threats associated to the statehood and establishes the priorities for the national security system's establishment together with internal, foreign and defence policies which will contribute to the long-term security of Lithuania. Below, Table 4 will provide a structured sequence of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania. The National Security Strategy is divided into Chapters (*Skyrius* in Lithuanian), which are further sub-divided into named Sections and then into numbered statements ("Nacionalinio Saugumo Strategija," 2021).

Table 4. Overview of citizen role defined by the National Security Strategy (Information retrieved from "Nacionalinio Saugumo Strategija," 2021).

Role of citizens	**Chapters**
Citizens ensure the external security, deterrence, defence of the constitutional order and sovereignty	Chapter I General provisions
Citizens collaborate with civil society and civilian organisations, the president, the government, the parliament, armed forces, police, intelligence	
Citizens develop will to defend Lithuania through education and enablement of Riflemen's Union Citizens complement the armed forces	Chapter IV Priorities and objectives of national security politics (Section on State defence) Key Points 34.1, 34.7, 34.8
Citizens contribute to interior, defence and foreign policies for national security objectives	Chapter IV Priorities and objectives of national security politics (Section on State defence) Key Points 30, 31, 34.1, 34.7, 34.8
Citizens strengthen national identity and promote cooperation through NGOs	Chapter IV Priorities and objectives of national security politics (Resilience of state and society section) Key Point 45.1, 45.5

State Defence Plan. To begin with, in 2023 the president of Lithuania introduced the State Defence Plan (or *Valstybės gynybos planas* in Lithuanian) which is aimed at removing all uncertainties about the defence and shows the direction of the country's strategy and the role of the Lithuanian citizens in the implementation of defence policy (Andrukaitytė, 2023). The defence of Lithuania is based on

total defence principle and the country will mobilise all resources including military and non-military for defending it. The plan was prepared by the expert group led by the president of the Republic and approved by the State Defence Council (or *Valstybės gynybos taryba* in Lithuanian) (Stankevičius, 2023). The Council is a state institution under the president of Lithuania and was established by the law on Council on State Defence (1997), and it comprises of the president, prime minister, speaker of the Seimas (Parliament of Lithuania), minister of national defence and chief of defence (Parliament of Lithuania, 1997). According to the latter law the main purpose of the Council is to consider foreign and domestic policies to assure Lithuania's security and territorial integrity. If the country is to face threats for their sovereignty or an armed attack, the Council proposes recommendations to the president, the Seimas and the government on the organisation of defence against the armed aggression, declaration of the state of war and mobilisation (Varnienė, 2024). The State Defence Plan outlines the steps needed to implement the defence policy of Lithuania by using the principle of total defence, and as a crucial component of total defence, the plan consists of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy by preparing the citizens for civil resistance. Therefore, the State Defence Plan is an important document within the legal environment of Lithuania that provides steps for the implementation of defence policy. Lastly, together with the crucial component of total defence, namely, the citizens and their involvement in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania, the State Defence Plan in total provides six principles of how total defence will be achieved in Lithuania. To portray the principles from the State Defence Plan in a structured manner, Table 5 below lists the six principles and a short explanation of each principle.

Table 5. The principles of total defence in Lithuania and their meanings (Information retrieved from Office of the President of Lithuania, 2023).

Principles to achieve total defence	**Explanation**
1. National Security Strategy	Long-term priorities and objectives for implementing the model of total defence
2. State Armed Defence Concept	Operational plans for armed defence (civilian-military interoperability)
3. State Mobilisation Plan	Civilian mobilisation plans (national resource integration)
4. Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance	Citizen education and preparation for armed and non-armed civil resistance
5. Laws for unconditional state defence	Comprehensive security laws (military, civilian state and civil society cooperation)
6. State Defence Council	Coordinates state defence matters, commands defence actions

In conclusion, the above normative and strategic documents define the legal framework of Lithuania's defence policy and name the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy. The Constitution of Lithuania establishes the constitutional right and duty of citizens to defend Lithuania and grants the freedom to resist the enemy to protect the statehood. The Constitution defines another role of citizens to complete military service or alternative service to prepare for an effective defence. The Law on the Basics of National Security stresses the importance of active citizen participation and their contribution to efforts of civil society, state institutions and armed forces when defending Lithuania. The Law provides the citizens their role to participate in civil resistance and in face of aggression to contribute towards the protection of national identity and sabotage the enemy.

Furthermore, the National Security Strategy further lists the role of citizens which is to participate in state's defence, obey to legitimate state institutions and equip with knowledge how to participate in civil resistance and help armed forces. While the discussed documents establish the legal environment and the role of citizens in the implementation of Lithuania's defence policy, the State Defence Plan acts as a framework which includes the most important strategic documents to define Lithuania's defence and too establishes the role of citizens to know what to do during mobilisation and participate in civil resistance. Therefore, the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy is crucial as Lithuania uses the principle of total defence and the discussed documents assure the preparedness of citizens in peacetime to know their role, to improve resilience and to have an effective national defence.

2.2. The practice of citizen involvement in defence policy in Lithuania

Consequentially, when it comes to citizen involvement, Lithuania sees the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance measures right now. This research finds that Lithuania is committed in preparing its population civil resistance. The country is focusing on establishing more ways for citizens to learn practical skills and get trained, so they could effectively participate in civil resistance. Therefore, this section will focus on citizen involvement in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania through enhancing armed and non-violent civil resistance.

As a tool to increase resilience of Lithuanians and equip the population with an accessible method to familiarise themselves of what to do in emergencies, the Department of Mobilisation and Civil Resistance (MCRD) of the Ministry of National Defence (MINDEF) came up with the project to establish self-learning platform called "School of Mobilisation" (or *Mobilizacijos mokykla* in Lithuanian). This platform provides with the opportunity to prepare themselves for mobilisation and forms of civil resistance, it also equips the participants with information on allies and their involvement in Lithuania's defence. The establishment of such platform provides a modern tool for the population to obtain necessary knowledge for a potential emergency situation and how to prepare for resistance. The tool offers educative activities which can be completed remotely from home (*Krašto Apsaugos Ministerijos 2023 M. Veiklos Ataskaita.*, 2024).

Moreover, research finds, that similarly to Finland and their "72-hour concept", Lithuania implements its analogue as well. In Lithuania, Fire and Rescue Department under the Ministry of Interior has developed a website called "LT72" where critical information about survival in the first 72-hour period of danger is stored. The website aims to prepare the country and its citizens for any type of emergencies to increase the resilience of the population in face of threats and learn how to efficiently behave in times of crises. This platform provides how to best prepare in advance with stockpiling food, water and other products and tools needed for food prep which would ensure that a person is equipped for a period of 72 hours in case the person needs to relocate or doesn't have access to any other sources of essential food products. "LT72" gives recommendations and practical tips on food types and how to prepare such foods, for example, when heating canned foods, one needs to remove the label. Furthermore, besides providing the list of essential foods to take, it also mentions that one should take his or her favourite food too (LT72.lt, 2022c). This can be seen as a tool to cope when faced with an emergency and besides eating essential food to survive, one can also enjoy some food of their liking and at least for a short period of time forget the stressful environment and equip oneself with what better emotional state. Next, the website also lists the crucial tools to take and how to prepare an emergency kit. The list begins with identity documents, precious pictures, money and

jewellery. When evacuating, it is important to take a phone and a charger, some gadgets which would act as light sources, radio and batteries. Then it is very important to stock medicines and hydrogen peroxide so they would be ready to take when evacuating home. Next, clothes should be prepared according to the season together with blankets and sleeping bags to keep oneself or others warm. Then, hygiene is also important, therefore toiletries must be taken too. Then the list ends with a notebook which should contain names, mobile phone numbers and addresses (of you and relatives or friends), pencil, face mask, matches in a water-resistant bag and cigarettes even for non-smokers as they can be used in exchange as a currency.

Additionally, when evacuating, it is important to send a text to relatives, turn off water, gas and electricity and take your pets (LT72.lt, 2022b). When taking a look into the emergency and its components it is evident, that the taken items not only can help in the emergency but also show that even when faced with danger and threat, one must keep their routine which can help to stay sane in distress. To add, when it comes to the evacuation, the website indicates how to recognise collective protection places where citizens can go to if the need arises. Such places are usually community centres, public institutions such as schools, culture centres, sports' facilities and they are already marked throughout Lithuania with a blue triangle in an orange square (see Figure 3) (LT72.lt, 2022a).

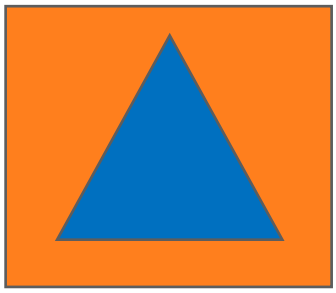

Fig. 3. Collective protection place sign to seek in an emergency (Image created by the author).

Conscription. The key aspect that figures in the legal environment of defence policy in Lithuania, is the improvement of armed civil resistance. Such measure is taken in Lithuania to prepare the population for armed civil resistance through the compulsory military service for young men, which was reinstated in 2015 by the Parliament of Lithuania. The decision was driven by the rapidly changing geopolitical environment and insufficiency of active personnel in the Armed Forces, therefore, by reinstating mandatory military service Lithuania significantly improved its defence capabilities (Lithuanian Armed Forces, 2024). The compulsory military training in Lithuania has seen several changes since its revival to focus on the promotion of total defence and citizen involvement in country's defence. Initially, up to 4000 male citizens between the ages of 18 to 26 are enlisted for a nine-month service each year says the Armed forces (2024), however, according to the Lithuanian national broadcaster LRT, in early 2024 the Parliament of Lithuania made legislative changes for draftee age to be changed to 18-22. In addition to that, the draftee age was also extended to 17-year-old young men and those who appear fit upon their health check, will be enlisted too to start the service once they reach 18 post high-school graduation (BNS, 2024). MINDEF states that constant changes that are brought to the legislative body, the parliament, are to portray compulsory military training as more appealing for the citizens, train more junior commanders, fill in the gap by recruiting needed specialists and ultimately to achieve inclusive conscription system without the need to draft the conscripts by using computer based selective system (Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania, 2024). Besides the compulsory military service, there are measures to encourage voluntary participation in armed forces. Citizens aged 18-38 despite their sex can volunteer to join armed forces,

although earlier made amends changed the volunteer age too, now it is 18-39, once again showing the country's inclusive approach to prepare even more civilians for armed civil resistance (Trembo, 2024). The role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania in this instance is defined by reinstating the mandatory military service and providing an opportunity for a segment of citizens to contribute to Lithuania's defence capabilities through armed citizen resistance.

Military Commandant. Furthermore, to improve current defence capabilities and train the citizens with needed skills for armed resistance, Lithuania employed another measure to increase the overall resistance of the country. In 2024, the Lithuanian Armed Forces reformed the Military Commandant's Office, which in result allows the training of reserve personnel and citizens with or without prior military experience during peacetime by incorporating them into already existing Military Commandant units (Stankevičius, 2024). A total of 27 such units will be established across Lithuania, allowing citizens to voluntarily enrol. The primary objective of the reformed Military Commandant units is to involve citizens of Lithuania, equip them with essential military knowledge and integrate them into commandant unit structures. According to MINDEF, training of the new units will commence in October 2024, lasting between three and ten days per year. During this period, the role of citizens is to learn how to protect their local areas, safeguard key infrastructure, and fulfil other tasks assigned by the Armed Forces in the event of war (Važgauskaitė-Patašienė, 2024). By having restructured Military Commandant's Office and its units, it defines the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through armed civil resistance, providing additional opportunity to another segment of citizens to partake in defending the country.

Lithuanian Riflemen's Union. Moreover, one more tool apparent in the legal environment of defence policy in Lithuania is the enablement of civil society to develop civil resistance in Lithuania. The Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (LRU) is a civilian volunteer-based organisation that is partially state financed. Its main goal is to attract citizens of Lithuania to get equipped with needed skills to participate in both armed and non-violent civil resistance, educate citizens about their duty to defend the country and in times of crisis help protect the population and sovereignty of Lithuania (Lietuvos Šaulių Sąjunga, 2023). The tasks and operations of the Union are listed in the designated law on the Riflemen's Union adopted by the Parliament of Lithuania and the Statute approved by the Minister of National Defence (Lietuvos Šaulių Sąjunga, 2023). Citizen knowledge and skills are crucial to be developed during peacetime, therefore the Union seeks to uptrain the Lithuanian citizens who voluntarily express their will to participate in country's defence during peacetime. In case of invasion, the members of Riflemen's Union are ready to support the Lithuanian Armed Forces and help maintain the order within the country, contribute to the safeguarding of the critical infrastructure and execute armed and non-violent civil resistance to deter the aggressor and prevent it from progressing within the territory of Lithuania. Yet another measure in the involvement of citizens in the implementation of defence policy through civil resistance is present in Lithuania, which provides an additional way for citizens to participate in country's defence. The citizens have the ability to obtain non-violent civil resistance techniques and armed techniques already during peace time. To continue, another project which was established by MINDEF, its Department of Mobilisation and Civil Resistance in collaboration with LRU and Lithuanian Armed Forces is called Important Lessons (or *Svarbios pamokos* in Lithuanian). The project is aimed to prepare the citizens of Lithuania practically to contribute to the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania. The citizens are provided with the opportunity (1) to complete an on-site training for civil resistance where crucial information is provided about the forms of civil resistance, first-aid, techniques on how to survive in nature and ethics of evacuation; (2) to participate in on-site lectures about strengthening the resilience for hybrid

threats where participants learn about the types of bad actors and their agendas, how to recognise and protect oneself from informational, cyber and energetical threats, malicious foreign intelligence, propaganda and fake news; (3) to complete an on-site training of drone control where citizens are equipped with legal knowledge of drone use, how to prepare a drone for one's usage, how to operate them in real life and learn drone flying techniques.

In summary, based on the current literature and normative and strategic documents of citizen involvement in the implementation of defence policy, Lithuania demonstrates a great dedication in fulfilling crucial steps to expand and strengthen its civil resistance. The combination of defining the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in its Constitution, the Law on the National Security Principles of the Republic of Lithuania and the National Security Strategy and then reviving the mandatory military service, drafting conscripts, providing the opportunity to voluntarily join the armed forces, reforming Military Commandant's Office so more citizens can partake in training for armed civil resistance and enabling Riflemen's Union to attract citizens to actively get skills for civil resistance, shows that Lithuania is actively preparing its citizens for armed civil resistance. The measures taken to establish several opportunities for citizens to be involved in the implementation of defence policy by participating in training for armed and non-violent civil resistance proves that Lithuania is not taking its sovereignty and freedom for granted and that it is committed for preparing the population to defend the territory of Lithuania if the aggression reaches the borders.

3. Analysis of citizen involvement in Lithuania's total defence principle

3.1. Research methodology

The theoretical framework and context analysis of the role of citizens within total defence found that citizen participation in the implementation of total defence principle is crucial. Therefore, it is imperative for states to form and implement civil resistance strategies hence citizens could perform their constitutional right and duty to defend the country when needed. Having identified the main research problem of the development and challenges in the implementation of civil resistance strategy within Lithuania's total defence a choice was made to conduct qualitative research. For the empirical part of the project this research aims (1) to conduct analysis of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance and (2) evaluate the progress of the implementation of the Strategy using secondary data and annual reports of responsible ministries and organisations together with primary data obtained by conducting eight interviews of people directly working with the implementation of the Strategy. Qualitative research allowed to be more flexible and perform a deeper analysis of the studied topic of citizen involvement in Lithuania's defence policy. Key concepts which were analysed during this research in the context of Lithuania's defence policy and citizen readiness were "resilience", "citizen preparedness" and "civil resistance". The purpose of the project is to define citizen preparedness to take their role to participate in civil resistance by analysing the progress of the implementation of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance. Due to the complexity of the defence policy and citizen involvement in the implementation of it, the qualitative research method allowed to go back and forth when researching and analysing accordingly as it provided contextual understanding of the research topic as new findings emerged.

Research design. This paper created a unique research design that was applied throughout the project. When performing contextual analysis and defining the legal environment of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy within the second chapter of the project, purposely, the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance was left out and fully disclosed and analysed in the analysis part of the project in this chapter. Such decision was made to prepare a comprehensive approach to analysis the main topic of this project. The project began by picking the roles of citizens through analysing the Strategy, then grouping the goals of the Strategy into appropriate groups which allowed to measure the progress, then identifying bodies responsible for the implementation of the goals and eventually moving to the evaluation of the progress the responsible bodies made so far. The below figure pictures the research design created by the author of the project.

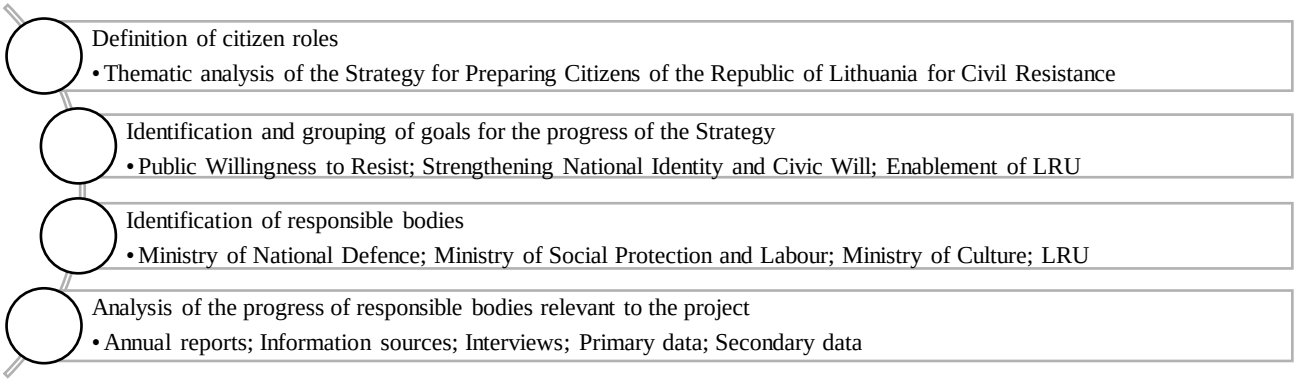

Fig. 4. Research design (created by the author).

3.1.1. Thematic document and secondary data analysis

For this part, document analysis was performed of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance. Thematic document analysis established a structured framework in this paper to identify the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy by examining and interpreting extracted information and building empirical knowledge (Bryman, 2016).

Data collection. On May 17, 2022, the Parliament of Lithuania ratified the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance and this project analysed it to collect the data on the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy. The Strategy consists of 14 impact indicators, which in this research are called goals for clarity. The goals help to define the role of citizens and prepare them for civil resistance during peacetime. Annual reports with primary data of ministries and organisations were collected through respective official websites of these institutions as they contained crucial information needed for this project to define the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania and its efforts in preparing the citizens for civil resistance. The project collected last available annual activity reports of 2023 from the Ministry of National Defence, the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour, the Ministry of Culture. Additionally, the project collected two reports of the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union as the organisation did not provide their concrete annual activity report of 2023, therefore two different reports were analysed. Moreover, a report of the planned strategic activity from 2024 to 2026 of the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour and the planned strategic activity report from 2024 to 2035 of LRU were analysed to identify their future plans and goals which were not yet implemented. Moreover, when the annual activity reports or planned strategic activity reports were missing information on the implementation of goals, articles from the official websites of the named ministries and the Riflemen's Union were used. To complement the research, secondary data was used which was obtained by the responsible ministries' orders. Ministry of National Defence order yearly a research company called *Spinter research* to conduct a public opinion survey which is related to the first goal group, namely, "Public willingness to resist", where a random sample of 1014 citizens of Lithuania participated in December 15-24, 2023. The public opinion survey measured the maximum margin error of 3.1%. Ministry of Social Protection and Labour ordered a research company called *Vilmorus* to conduct research for the second goal group, namely, "Strengthening national identity and civic will" to measure the civic empowerment index where a random sample of 1042 citizens of Lithuania aged 18-75 from 22nd November to 2nd December 2023. The public opinion survey for the Ministry of Culture to measure national identity is conducted every three years by two research companies, namely *KOG institutas*, and *Norstat LT* and the last one was conducted in November 2023, however, neither the sample size nor sample method are not disclosed.

Data analysis methods. The analysis employed thematic and content analysis. Thematic document analysis allowed to find related patterns within strategic documents and the Strategy (Clarke & Braun, 2016) while content analysis allowed to focus on concepts and indicators for the definition of challenges (Clarke & Braun, 2016; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). Once the role of citizens and the goals of the Strategy were defined, the research proceeded by grouping the goals into three different groups. The goals describe the progress of the implementation of the Strategy. The grouping of the goals followed a logic related to their meaning, interconnectedness and the responsible bodies who will be implementing these goals. The grouping allowed to continue research on the progress and citizen involvement in the implementation of defence policy, which created a framework to follow for the second part of the research of this project. Two goals were purposely excluded from the analysis, which are related to the satisfaction of state institutions which are directly reporting to the Ministry

of Interior and the increase of the number of soldiers in Lithuania as they seemed irrelevant to the created three goal groups. No to mention the fact, such research design allowed to synthesise the information in three separate groups. Such method was selected because the grouped goals of the Strategy are being implemented by different ministries, departments or organisations and were seen appropriate when analysing the reports of the implementation as each group of goals had a designated responsible institution. The three created groups of goals were (1) Public Willingness to Resist, (2) Strengthening National Identity and Civic Will and (3) Enablement of Lithuanian Riflemen's Union. Each group consisted of a few similar goals inside of it and bodies responsible for the implementation. The first group of goals is assigned to the Ministry of National Defence and State Security Department, the second group is assigned to the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour and the Ministry of Culture, while the third group is assigned to the Ministry of National Defence and LRU. This led into further research of the identified ministries and organisations and their completed work towards preparing citizens of Lithuania for civil resistance. The secondary data from the public opinion surveys was processed by the author using Excel software to create relevant charts and visual representation for this research. The created charts allowed to display the progress of the Strategy and picture multiple trends of areas where public perception aligns or diverges from the goals in the Strategy.

3.1.2. Expert interviews

For this part of the research, after defining the role of citizens and the goals of the Strategy, the exploration of the progress of the implementation proceeded. Once the goals from the Strategy were grouped and responsible bodies for the implementation listed, the research continued with obtaining data for the progress of the implementation.

Data collection. For the collection of data from the interview part of the research, a purposive sampling was done, where participants from eight different ministries, institutions and organisations were selected. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain the needed data for the evaluation of the progress of the Strategy, define the challenges and possible improvements. The interviews were conducted from 27th November to 17th December each lasting from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. The research instrument was a questionnaire of 12 open-ended identical questions which suited all experts. According to Frechtling & Sharp (1997) the preparation of questions for expert interviews allows to obtain in-depth knowledge from the interviewees and process the obtained data systematically. The questionnaire questions were created using a phenomenological approach to display experts' perceptions and experiences when implementing the civil resistance strategy (Montague, 2015) and at the same time a few questions were targeted to reveal effectiveness, challenges and possible improvement of the Strategy by using questions inspired by programme evaluation theory (Mertens & Wilson, 2019). Despite the prepared questions, the interviews followed a semi-structured style and remained flexible with little changes and follow up questions made during them (Adams, 2015). Seven interviews were conducted over the phone while one interview was face-to-face within premises of the Crisis Management Centre.

Sample size. When it comes to the interview part, the sample size was eight interviews which allowed to focus on the quality rather than breadth. Taking a look into the theme of this study, the number of experts seemed appropriate to gain rich and valuable data for the evaluation of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance. The experts are directly involved to the studied theme and have the appropriate knowledge of the Strategy. The choice of experts was made accordingly to their role within the Strategy and activities related towards its implementation.

In the below table, experts are labelled with their representing institutions and their role within the Strategy is displayed based on three categories.

Table 6. Labels of experts, representing institution, categorisation of experts (created by the author).

Expert label	Expert institution	Categorisation of experts
E1	Crisis Management Centre (CMC)	Coordination of the Strategy
E2	Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department (MCRD)	Execution of the Strategy
E3	Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department (MCRD)	Execution of the Strategy
E4	Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (LRU)	Execution of the Strategy
E5	Lithuanian Riflemen's Union (LRU)	Execution of the Strategy
E6	NGO (chose not to disclose the name)	Supporting the implementation of the Strategy
E7	Ministry of Social Protection and Labour (SOCMIN)	Supporting the implementation of the Strategy
E8	State Border Guard Service (SBGS)	Supporting the implementation of the Strategy

Data analysis methods. For the analysis of the interviews, it followed standard qualitative analysis steps (Gaižauskaitė & Valavičienė, 2016). The interview data was transcribed into separate Word files and skimmed through. The transcripts were thematically analysed to identify patterns and relationships between provided information from the experts and ideas with initial important answers and thoughts were noted. Then, the data was labelled which followed with grouping the interconnected labels into groups. The interview data was grouped into five groups based on the posed questions and experts' answers to obtain valuable information which could be further analysed. The five groups were (1) Perception of the Strategy, (2) Contributing to the Strategy, (3) Citizen involvement, (4) Challenges and (5) Improvements. Eventually, the data was interpreted according to the research objectives with the purpose to evaluate the Strategy. The information gained through interviews was synthesised by incorporating the findings together with other research results in a form of discussion and linkage to the literature.

Limitations. Part of the research relies on secondary data where one public opinion survey did not provide the sample size, which questions the reliability and representativeness. Although the literature was abundant with defence policies and the principle of total defence in Lithuania, there was limited information for preparedness for civil resistance in Lithuania from some institutions and experts working with the implementation of the Strategy. Not having all annual activity reports require reliance on informational sources. Moreover, future researchers should also conduct interviews with other stakeholders such the Ministry of Culture as this research did not do that although the Ministry is involved in the Strategy. Additionally, since the Strategy does not directly involve NGOs, nevertheless, they participate in the implementation of the Strategy, therefore, a few other NGOs working with citizen preparedness for civil resistance could be approached for potential interviews.

3.2. Results of defining the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania

When the geopolitical climate begins to change around the globe, it raises concerns for the European governments and in result motivates them to review their defence capabilities and amend their

defence policies because in the proximity, Russia is employing its expansionistic motives and is waging war in Ukraine in time of writing this project (Dodds et al., 2023; Göransson, 2024). Therefore, this section explores and analyses Lithuania's defence policy and the approach of the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle. By clearly defining the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle, countries assure that the citizens become resilient enough to withstand non-military harms like propaganda, cyber-attacks but at the same time prepare the citizens to be willing to defend their country with all means possible if military harm approaches. Resilient society can quickly recover and adapt to crises, continue resisting and helping military resistance groups (Jones et al., 2022). While previous chapters of this project contained the exploration of total defence and the role of citizens in Nordic countries and Switzerland and draw the context of Lithuania with legal environment of normative and strategic documents of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania, this section will exclusively consist of one strategic document defining the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle through civil resistance in Lithuania. The explored and analysed document in this chapter is Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance (or *Lietuvos Respublikos piliečių rengimo pilietiniam pasipriešinimui strategija* in Lithuanian).

In 2022, MINDEF announced three steps which describe the establishment and preparation of citizens for civil resistance in Lithuania which in essence provides the role of citizens, first, by having the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance, second by making itself (the Ministry) the coordinating body of civil resistance, and third, by enabling and exploiting civil society organisations such as Riflemen's Union in mobilising and participating in the preparation of Lithuanian citizens for civil resistance (Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania, 2022). On account of this, the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle through civil resistance is being mentioned in 2016 by the Defence Ministry, then in March 2022 the same ministry brings the civil resistance strategy into its measures to prepare the citizens for civil resistance, in May 2022, the Parliament of Lithuania adopts the civil resistance strategy and in 2023 the State Defence Plan refers to it as the cornerstone of total defence in Lithuania. Having citizens placed in such a position signifies the vital role that each member of the society is a valuable component in protecting the nation's sovereignty, security, and democratic values (Office of the President of Lithuania, 2023). Essentially, Chapter I on general provisions of the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance foresees the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania through civil resistance and enlists the objectives and the direction of the implementation of the strategy in order to have an effective civil resistance. As it follows, the Strategy enlists roles that are applicable to citizen, therefore, they will be reflected in this section with explanatory statements that define the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania. The Strategy defines the role of citizens as crucial as Lithuania's defence focuses on whole-of-society approach which is the essence of total defence principle. The country relies on the unconditionality of defence and stresses the importance of citizen preparedness during peacetime to increase their resilience and strengthen their civic will. A few methods to achieve that are through youngster education in school and through participating in training. The education in schools should consist of subjects on history, patriotism, main principles of defence and constitutional will to defend Lithuania, which should strengthen the civic will of younger generation to defend Lithuania. The training to increase resilience and strengthen civic will is defined by the enablement of LRU who would be contributing to equipping youngsters and adult citizens with crucial knowledge and trainings to achieve stronger resilience and wider civic will (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

Furthermore, the Strategy defines more responsibilities to the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union to prepare citizens during peacetime and help them to know their role in the implementation of defence policy. The main role of citizens is their active participation in civil resistance, which LRU is equipped to train the citizens to perform non-violent and armed civil resistance. Citizens have the opportunity to become the members of the Riflemen's Union and be actively uptrained with armed resistance techniques while other citizens can enrol in non-violent civil resistance training to obtain critical skills on how to effectively resist. A few other roles of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle are defined by the Strategy, which are to support and obey the legitimate state institutions, know how to resist hybrid threats and be involved in their local communities. The involvement in local communities is significantly important and citizens are to be included in voluntary activities which in result nurtures the sense of belonging and strengthens the civic will during peacetime. In times of aggression, the Strategy provides additional role of citizens to assist partisans in occupied territories so they could effectively perform underground and armed resistance (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022). Not to mention the fact, the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance besides listing the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy also provides a number of responsible institutions for the coordination and implementation of the Strategy itself. To illustrate the responsible bodies from the Strategy, table below lists them in a categorised way.

Table 7. Actors associated to the implementation of the Strategy (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

Coordinated by	**Implemented by**
Government of Lithuania	Ministry of National Defence, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Social Security and Labour, Ministry of Interior, Lithuanian Riflemen's Union, State Security Department.

As the Government of Lithuania is responsible for the coordination of the Startegy, the legal act states that the implementation of the Strategy is taking place from 2022 to 2035 and that the Strategy is implemented according to the Government's arranged plan. The plan divides the implementation of the Strategy in three stages, namely, 2023–2025, 2026–2030 and 2031–2035. The Office of the Government is responsible for monitoring the Strategy and tracking the progess, while the implementation of the objectives is measured by the set goals in the Strategy. Each responsible party involved (see Table 7) is obliged to update the Office of the Govenrment on the progress of the implementation yearly before March 1 (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

The Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance created specific goals which have to be achieved so the implementation of the Strategy would define the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle and prepare the citizens for civil resistance. In this project, the goals are grouped into three groups which establish a framework for a systematic analysis. The groups are (1) "Public willingness to resist", (2) "Strengthening national identity and civic will" and (3) "Enablement of Lithuanian Riflemen's Union" (see Table 8). The three groups were purposely made because the first group's goals are to be implemented by MINDEF and State Security Department, the goals of the second group are assigned to the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour and the Ministry of Culture (although not to be analysed here as it targets a very specific and small group of workers) and finally the third group with the goals to be implemented by LRU and the Ministry of National Defence.

Table 8. Goals form the Civil Resistance Strategy grouped for this project and the responsible implementation bodies (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

Groups of goals	**Responsible institutions**
1. Public willingness to resist	Ministry of National Defence, State Security Department
2. Strengthening national identity and volunteering	Ministry of Social Protection and Labour, Ministry of Culture
3. Enablement of Riflemen's Union	Ministry of National Defence, Riflemen's Union

The first group of goals based to the goals of the Strategy aims to increase public awareness to resist whose implementation is assigned to the Ministry of National Defence and partially to the Department of State Security. The public willingnes to resist in here is expressed by the public opinion. First two goals in the group are related to civil resistance and whether the citizens of Lithuania should resist employing armed civil resistance where the number of people willing to contiribute is expected to raise from 44% in 2020 to 60% in 2035 and whether to employ non-violent civil resistance the number of people willing to contribute is expected to raise from 54% in 2020 to 70% in 2035. Another important goal from the group is to increase awareness of the population of what to do during mobilisation. The public awareness of what to do during mobilisation is also set to grow from 28% in 2020 to 43% in 2035. Lastly, the Strategy aims to increase critical thinking of the population and build resilience when it comes to malicious intelligence actions from abroad. Therefore, the number of citizens who are aware of the presence of foreign intelligence in Lithuania and their malicious activities which pose threat to Lithuanian citizens and how to protect oneself from them is to increase to 70% of total population by 2035. The 2020 date is not present as the metric was not measured at the time. The first group of goals contributing to public willingness to resist is portrayed in the figure below.

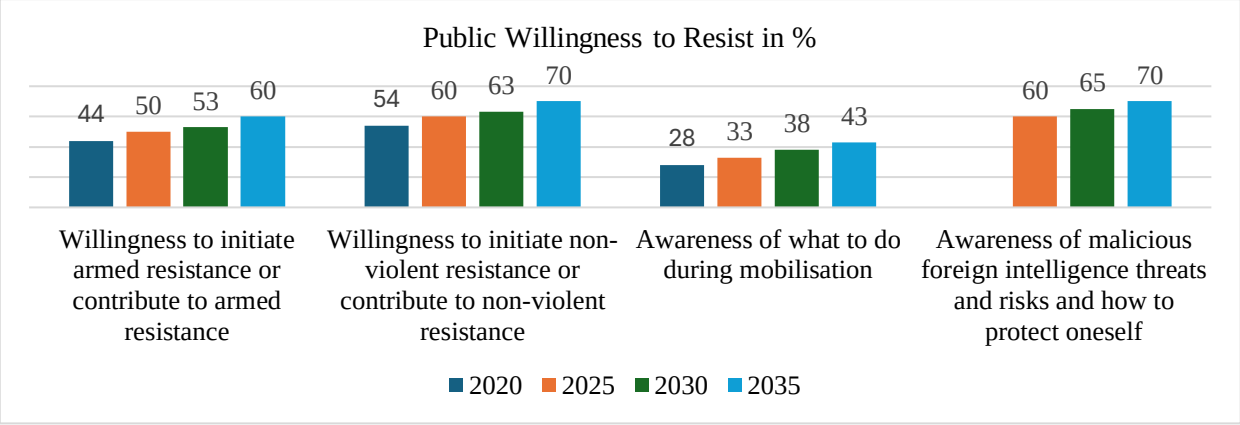

Fig. 5. Anticipated goals from Civil Resistance Strategy to increase public willingness to resist (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

Consequentially, secondary data from the public opinion survey provided the needed numbers to deem whether the Lithuanian people are willing to resist and if they involve themselves into the efforts of Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department. Public willingness to defend Lithuania, awareness of what to do during mobilisation and awareness of malicious foreign intelligence activities are the three key questions which signal that in theory Lithuania managed to achieve four goals from the group of goals "Public willingness to resist". First goal to raise people's awareness of what to do

during mobilisation, second and third goals which were combined into one as increase people's willingness to defend Lithuania and fourth goal to increase people's awareness of foreign malicious intelligence. The early achievement of the four goals prior to the 2025 deadline from the first group is presented in the figure below.

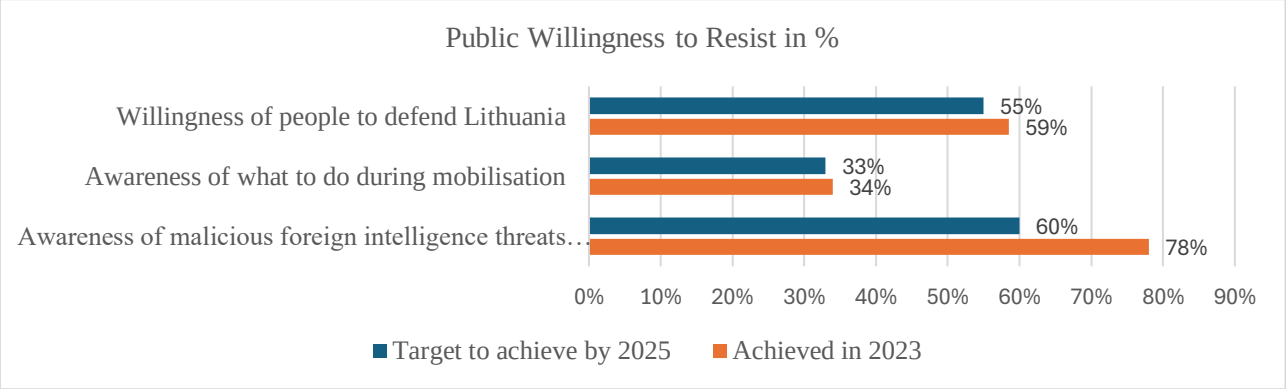

Fig. 6. Actual implementation of goals (second and third grouped into one) from "Public willingness to resist" (Information retrieved from Government of Lithuania, 2023; Krašto Apsaugos Ministerijos 2023 M. Veiklos Ataskaita., 2024).

The second group of goals drafted in this research project is attributed to strengthening national identity, making volunteering more popular between the population and improving the civic empowerment index. The implementation of this goal group is assigned to the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour. A goal to increase part of society participating in historical memory interpretation events and fostering civic and national identity as a value is to increase gradually every five years and already from the year 2020, the Strategy wanted to increase the number of participants by 37%, then in 2025 by 42%, while in 2030 by 42% and eventually by 46% in 2035 (this goal is not present in Figure 7 which consists of the goals from this group). Moreover, the participation in voluntary activities of people in Lithuania is set to increase from 15% in 2020 to 25% in 2035 while the participation in community voluntary activities is expected to increase from 21% of the population in 2020 to 38% of the population in 2035.

Lastly, the civic empowerment index portrays the fluctuation of society who are interested in internal affairs of Lithuania, society's willingness to be part of the internal affairs and society's attitudes towards their possessed citizen duties (ELTA, 2024). The Strategy aims is to increase the civic empowerment index from 41.3% in 2020 to 55% in 2035. The grouped goals which represent the strengthening of national identity and development of civic will are portrayed in the figure below.

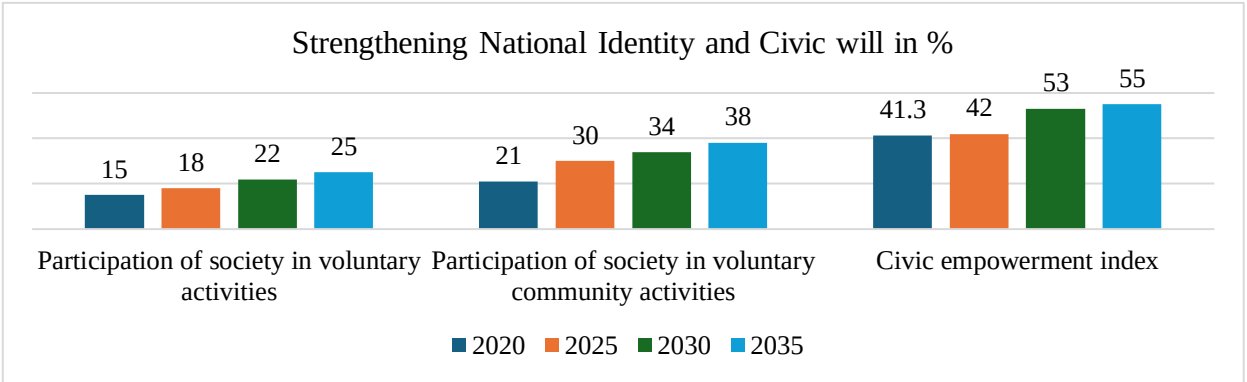

Fig. 7. Anticipated goals from Civil Resistance Strategy to strengthen national identity and civic will (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

The Ministry of Culture was responsible for the increase of part of society participating in historical memory interpretation events and fostering civic and national identity as a value. Initially, the Strategy depicted to increase the part of society every five years from 2020 until 2035. However, when analysing the annual report of 2023 of the Ministry of Culture, they frame this goal slightly different and specify that they measure the part of society participating in historical memory interpretation events and fostering civic and national identity as a value in a scale of 100% from the population and do not mention the increase. Therefore, the report shows that the Ministry of Culture implemented the goal at least for 2023, as 46% of the society participated in the historical memory interpretation events in 2023 while they anticipated 42.7%. The targets and the progress of the Ministry of Culture when implementing the goal related to Strategy are portrayed in the figure below.

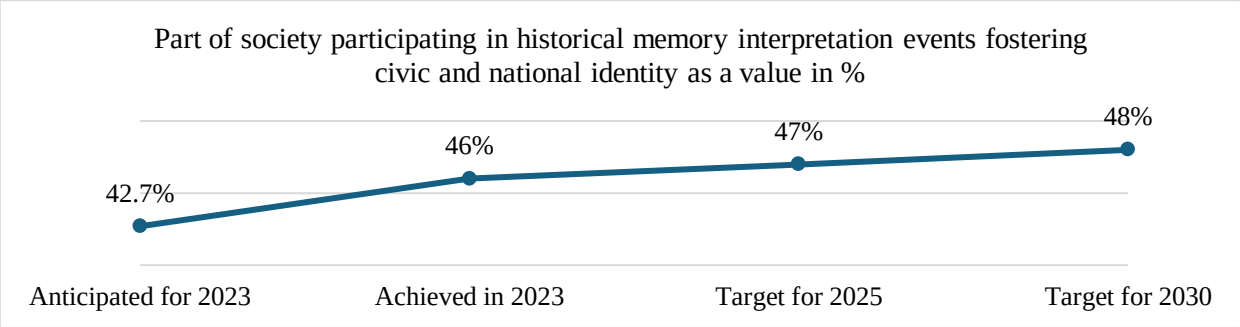

Fig. 8. Actual progress of implementing Ministry of Culture's goal (Information retrieved from Kultūros Ministerijos 2023 M. Veiklos Ataskaita, 2024).

Furthermore, Ministry of Social Protection and Labour was assigned as responsible to strengthen national identity and civic will. In their annual report of 2023, it is seen that SOCMIN failed to improve the civic empowerment index which is set to have the target value of 42 (out of 100) by 2025, nevertheless, the report also provides the information that they actually increased the target value to 45 for the year 2025 (*Socialinės Apsaugos Ir Darbo Ministerijos 2023 M. Veiklos Ataskaita.*, 2024). Although the annual report does not provide the reached value of civic empowerment index, the Ministry published an article with the 2023 index which was 36.7 later in 2024 after the Annual report (Ministry of Social Protection and Labour, 2024). To picture the adjusted targets from the annual report of 2023 of the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour and what was achieved and what was not, the figure below summarises the civic empowerment index and values related to it.

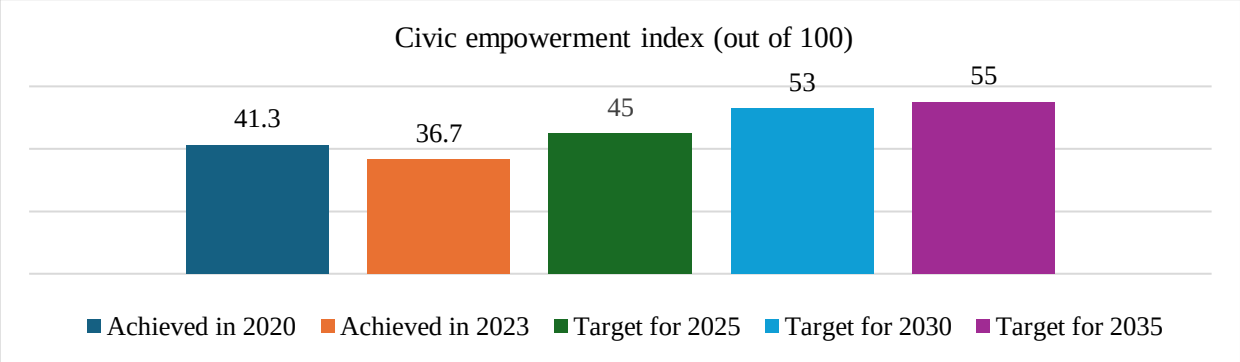

Fig. 9. Anticipated civic empowerment index Strategy (Information retrieved from "Annual report of 2023", 2024; Ministry of Social Protection and Labour, 2024).

The third group of goals that would indicate the success of the implementation of the Strategy is the Enablement Riflemen's Union whose implementation is assigned to MINDEF and the Lithuanian

Riflemen's Union. The Strategy aims to increase the number of adult members in LRU by 77% until 2035 from the number of adult members in 2020. Additionally, the combat unit of LRU is to consist of 95% of members who obtained military training by 2035. Laslty, the number of people who completed civil resistance training organised by LRU or the Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department is to increase by 738%, 2202% and 4778% in 2025, 2030 and 2035 respectively compared to the number in 2020. The grouped goals to enable LRU is portrayed in the Figure 10 below, however, the last goal is not portrayed in the figure due to its large values mismatching other goals from the group.

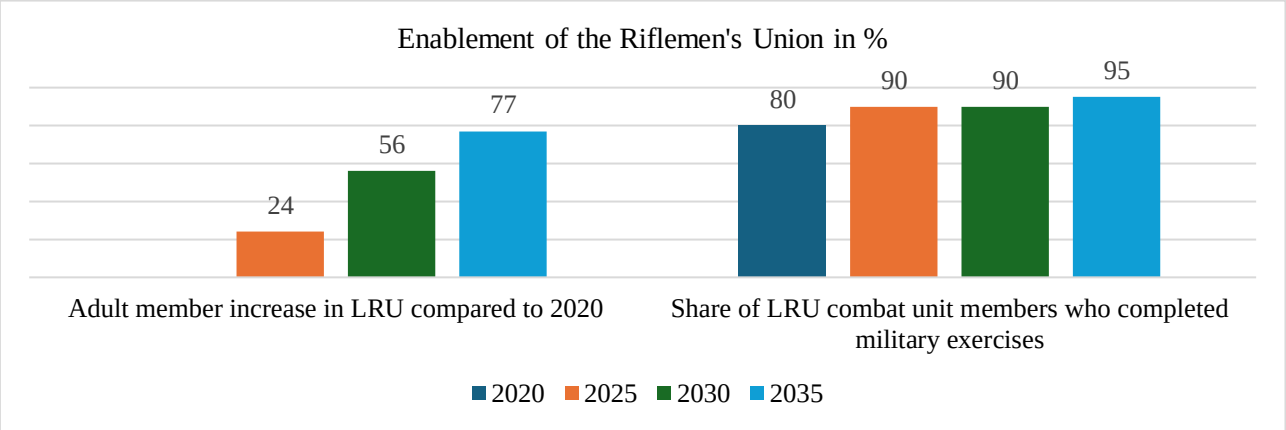

Fig. 10. Anticipated goals from Civil Resistance Strategy to enable LRU (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

Although the number of adult members joining LRU is increasing, the number of adult members in the Strategy was anticipated to be different. In 2021, the anticipated increase of members was at 24%, in 2020 the increase was anticipated at 56% while in 2023 the number of members is anticipated to increase by 77% when comparing to the adult member number of 2020. The anticipated increase and the actual increase of adult members within LRU is portrayed in the figure below.

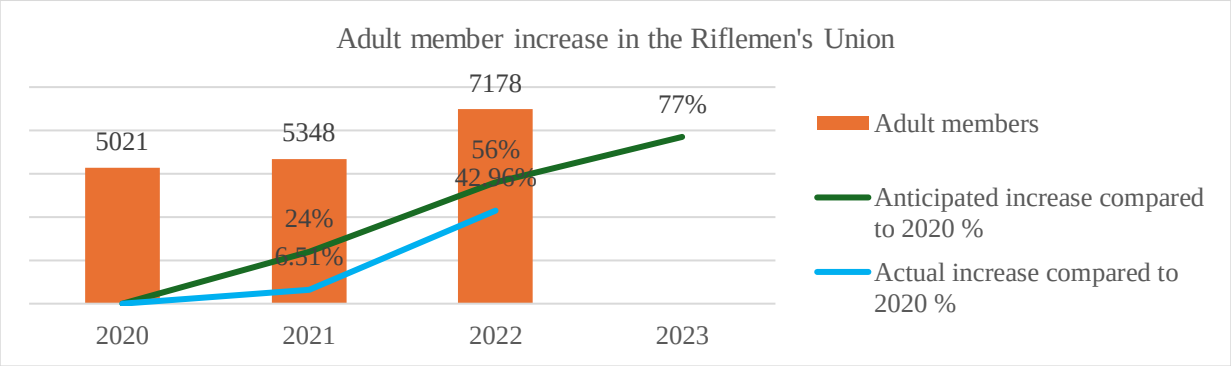

Fig. 11. Actual adult member increase in LRU (Data retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022; LŠS Personalo 2017-2022 Duomenys, 2023).

Complementary to this, LRU is indicating progress when it comes to implementing another goal from the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance. The next goal is their target to uptrain the combat unit members professionally at the Lithuanian Armed Forces so in times of mobilisation they could join armed resistance alongside the military. Already in 2020, the number of combat unit members of LRU being trained professionally was higher than anticipated by 52.83% and similar trend remained until the last available data from 2023. Although the actual

number of trained combat unit members of LRU dropped slightly each year, nevertheless it was still higher than initially planned. When taking a look into the below figure, it is apparent that LRU is collaborating with Armed Forces to provide their combat unit members a professional training. The training is crucial because uptrained combat unit members will defend Lithuania if the need arises professionally together with the Lithuanian Armed Forces and their members.

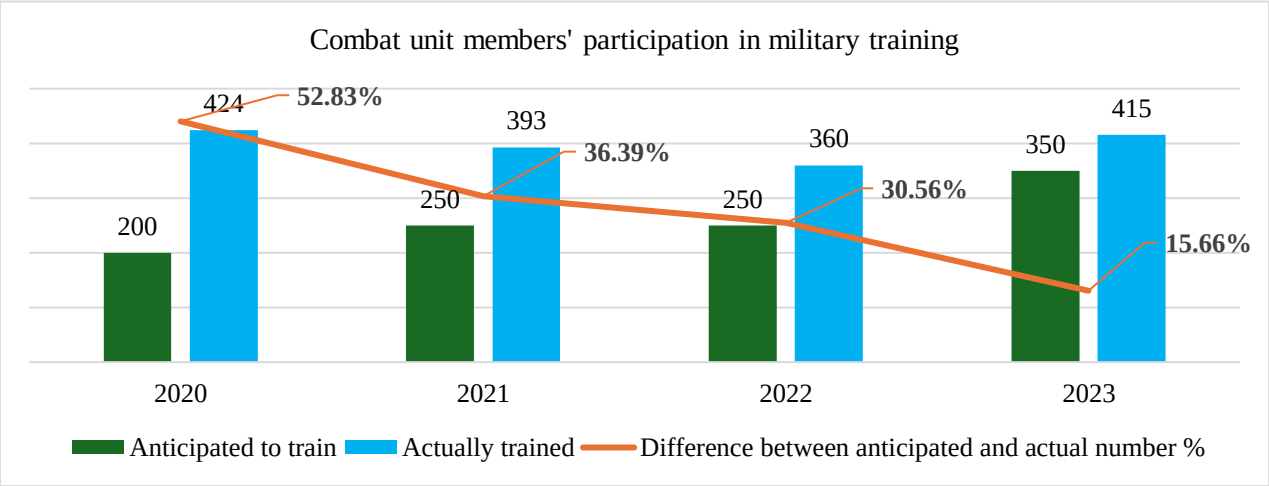

Fig. 12. Members of LRU participating in professional military training (Information retrieved from Parliament of Lithuania, 2022; Krašto Apsaugos Ministerijos 2023 M. Veiklos Ataskaita., 2024).

To continue, research finds the assigned additional funds for the implementation the Strategy. The Strategy by the Government of Lithuania (2023) provides the assigned funds for each specific objective within the Strategy, however, for the purpose of clarity and to simplify the abundance of different amounts of money, this project summs all the assigned funds for each direction. The directions in the Strategy correspond with separate Chapters within the Strategy. Table below portrays the summed funds for each direction/chapter per year. The years provided are 2023, 2024 and 2025 as the next following years are part of the remaining two stages of the implementation, namely, 2026-2030 and 2031-2035.

Table 9. Assigned additional yearly funds for the implementation of the Strategy for each direction/chapter (Information retrieved from Government of Lithuania, 2023).

Funding direction	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**
Resilience strengthening (Chapter V)	416.950 EUR	363.230 EUR	235.100 EUR
Strengthening of civic will (Chapter VI)	16,169.700 EUR	20,050.100 EUR	22,940.800 EUR
Equipment of skills and knowledge for non-violent civil resistance (Chapter VII)	479.550 EUR	1.192.600 EUR	1,070.880 EUR
Equipment of skills and knowledge for armed civil resistance (Chapter VIII)	14,909.700 EUR	17,200.600 EUR	19,199.600 EUR
Total amount	31,975.900 EUR	38,806.530 EUR	43,446.380 EUR

To analyse the concept of civil resistance, and the application of the Strategy in Lithuania, it is needed to stress that civil resistance consists of two forms, namely, it takes place in a form of armed civil resistance and a form of non-violent civil resistance (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2018). The Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance foresees many roles for citizens to take and it talks about their importance from the perspective of one's duty and constitutional right

to defend Lithuania, it also provides objectives of how the Strategy will be implemented so the effectiveness of civil resistance is of full potential.

As found in the previous section of this chapter, the Strategy consists of goals which aim to prepare the citizens of Lithuania already in peacetime by building resilience and developing civic will, getting citizens involved in their community and create sense of belonging and by actively preparing citizens for civil resistance both armed and non-violent. Although Lithuania prepared such extensive strategy and assigned many ministries and organisations to implement the Strategy, it still lacks the concrete roles for certain citizens and citizen groups to take if the need to resist arises. When analysing the Strategy and the involved institutions, it is found that an average citizen may not find their role in the implementation of defence policy. However, this project finds information of the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania for multiple citizen groups and how they can partake in civil resistance. As this project aims to define the role of citizens in the implementation of defence policy, Figure 13 (see Appendix 1) portrays roles of citizens and various citizen groups when it comes to civil resistance and distributes the roles among the relationship to armed civil resistance and non-violent civil resistance.

3.3. Results of progress identification of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania

Moving on, to increase resilience of Lithuanians the Strategy employs proactive measures during peacetime through strengthening critical thinking of the population, improving resilience against hybrid attacks and increase preparedness for a possible crisis, mobilisation, defence and civil resistance. As geopolitical climate around Europe intensified, Lithuania prioritised citizen preparedness for emergencies because citizens are the cornerstone of total defence principle (Sundelius & Eldeblad, 2023). The section below will consist of the results from the completed interviews which will be presented, discussed and displayed in multiple tables using a colour scheme to project answer uniqueness and repeating patterns where the darkness of the colour will signify the repeating patterns or shared perception of experts on posed questions.

Understanding the Strategy. Firstly, the completed interviews provide a shared understanding of Lithuania's civil resistance strategy as inclusive and based on constitutional principles. Participation in Lithuania’s defence and particularly in a form of civil resistance is depicted as both a right and a duty, which provides alternatives to armed defence and ensures multiple roles for citizens to participate in the implementation of defence policy. When it came to understanding of Lithuania's civil resistance strategy, all experts unanimously talked about the integration of civilians into national defence and categorised responses are displayed in the below table.

Table 10. Experts' perception of civil resistance strategy (created by the author).

Common notion	Categorised perception	Expert	Unique insight
Constitutional right and duty of citizens to participate in national defence.	Total defence	E4	Implementation of total defence into national defence policy.
	Skill development	E2	Development of civic will and skills for civil resistance.
		E3	Difference between armed and non-violent civil resistance.
		E6	Citizens’ will voluntarily obtain civil resistance skills.
		E1	Recognition of threats and direct citizen involvement.

	Citizen involvement	E5	To know the role in Lithuania's defence.
		E7	Support of NGOs to involve more citizens.
		E8	Citizen involvement to become resilient.

The shared perception of the Strategy on citizen constitutional right and duty to defend Lithuania, appears to support Lithuania's efforts to diversify defence capabilities instead of relying on its military and NATO allies. The country prepares entire society to become resilient against emerging threats. E4 from LRU added, that there is a common misconception among citizens who think that country's defence only applies to those owning a gun, therefore, a focus is needed to promote the constitutional right and duty of every citizen with or without gun to partake in civil resistance.

Contribution to the Strategy. Secondly, all experts contribute uniquely to the Strategy. While some are responsible for the administrative part, others are taking the executive and practical stances when implementing the Strategy and some are completing supporting roles. CMC monitors the progress of the Ministries and LRU through the council consisting of representatives from governmental and civil society organisations. The role in coordinating the implementation of the Strategy ensures everyone's efforts are aligned and possible gaps are identified and addressed immediately. The roles of other experts and their represented institutions are listed in the table below.

Table 11. Experts' contribution to the Strategy (created by the author).

Common notion	**Categorised contribution**	**Expert**	**Expert efforts**
The work being done in our team/organisation is oriented towards citizen preparation for civil resistance.	Integral	E1	Integration of all capacities to coordinate the Strategy into a single direction.
	Supporting	E7	Looking for funding abroad to provide more assistance to NGOs to develop civic will.
		E8	Lobbying to involve vulnerable regions in the Strategy and appoint more resources to involve national minorities.
	Training performance	E2	Creation of resilience and recognition of disinformation trainings, civil resistance trainings, Drone Academy,
		E3	Coordination of online initiatives such as svarbiospamokos.lt and mobilizacijosmokykla.lt
		E4	New member onboarding and preparation for armed resistance.
		E5	Execution of trainings ensuring public safety, infrastructure restoration, and non-violent civil resistance skills.
		E6	Organisation of camps and trainings to develop morale to participate in Lithuania's defence using emotional intelligence.

Based on the Strategy, active participation of the population is the most crucial component in deterring potential aggressors. The Strategy and its approach not only provide practical skills to Lithuanian citizens but it also increases patriotism (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022). E1 added here, that by implementing the Strategy, Lithuania aims to make any opponent ineffective to "break our will, encourage collaboration, or undermine our efforts". However, E8 from SBGS stressed that the Strategy does not concentrate on vulnerable groups and regions of Lithuania.

Citizen involvement. Thirdly, based on the completed interviews, it is evident, that citizen involvement in defence policy implementation indeed has risen among Lithuanians. A significant

indicator of success is the growing public interest in joining LRU, participating in the variety of trainings organised by the MCRD and by applications from NGOs received by SOCMIN to get funding for their activities that foster volunteering among the nation. Active citizen participation in preparation for their involvement in defence is influenced by a few factors. An external factor, in essence a motivator, has been geopolitical changes, such as war in Ukraine. The responses from experts are categorised in the below table to display the notions of increased citizen involvement to participate in activities related to the preparedness for civil resistance.

Table 12. Experts' comments on increased citizen involvement (created by the author).

Categorised notion	**Expert**	**Expert quote**
Civic will	E1	"People nowadays want to contribute, and most importantly, they are willing to do so".
	E6	"People look for alternatives and they turn to NGOs to obtain practical skills".
	E7	"Our society is changing and more NGOs than ever inquire us to get funding for the enablement of citizens".
Changes in Europe's geopolitics	E2	"Civic will emerges in times of crises, covid, war in Ukraine".
	E3	"Citizens are interested in practical courses because of Ukraine… thousands of people are on the waiting list".
	E4	"The increase in LRU memberships was evident when war in Ukraine started".
	E5	"People are afraid of what might happen here".

Despite active citizen self-involvement and sudden attention towards defence, there is a misconception among citizens and they need clarification of their role as citizens within total defence. E1 together with E4 and E5 note that when people talk about state defence, many immediately imagine that grabbing a weapon is the solution. "It's crucial to understand that the concept is much broader" E1 adds. Reflecting to conducted interviews, the lack of understanding of their role as citizens within total defence is pointed out by E2 and E3. They argue that narrow understanding is affected by cultural factors and the historical underdevelopment of civic engagement in Lithuania which is linked to lesser involvement of people to volunteering activities. They explained, "The lack of formal status or strong incentives for volunteers contributes to this challenge". However, those who feel the civic will, they participate in MCRD trainings to learn civil resistance skills. E1 stressed the importance of the Strategy and its aim to develop the ability of citizens to recognise threats, identify disinformation, and know how to protect themselves from it. E5 adds that it is important for civilians to support military operations and participate in non-violent civil resistance. The strategy as explained by E1, "aims to help society and citizens understand their role in national defence… not limited to direct participation in military or defence actions".

National identity. The Strategy declares that is equally important to strengthen national identity and civic will, because it promotes active and voluntary participation of civilians in defence activities which in result completes national readiness in the face of evolving security challenges (Lantis, 2009). The Strategy stresses that the civic will and collective determination of citizens to defend Lithuania's independence and resist aggressors in accordance with international norms is to be developed during peacetime. The analysed strategy emphasises the role of every citizen to contribute to resistance efforts through non-violent means. During the interview process, E6 mentioned that they contribute to the Strategy without having assigned it to them, they involve citizens through events, social media and educate people using emotional intelligence. They promote volunteering. "In every event we talk

about self-love, love for others, love for nature, and love for the homeland" E6 said. The activities include teaching adults and children to take care of oneself before assisting others when it comes to peacetime preparations for war. "I take care of myself, I pack my backpack, pack my child's backpack, we ensure we have drinking water" E6 added. NGOs operate according to what governmental institutions publish regarding what to do in case of emergencies. Moreover, to strengthen national identity of Lithuanians and improve civic will, the Strategy describes multiple measures to implement during peacetime through people's involvement in historical heritage activities which develop national identity and civic will and promotion of volunteering to strengthen sense of belonging and engage people with their communities. This goal was attributed to Ministry of Culture and SOCMIN (Parliament of Lithuania, 2022).

E1 mentioned that Civic Empowerment Index shows public willingness and readiness to defend Lithuania (although research finds that it is currently lower). E1 added that there were efforts made to fight disinformation and identify hybrid threats which contributed to the increased societal resilience. "The directions we follow are clear," E1 stated, adding that "progress could be faster, but overall, I believe we are on the right track". According to E8 from SBGS, there is little involvement of other governmental organisations which are crucial for civic empowerment. When the war in Ukraine started and the Strategy was confirmed, "I thought that civil resistance would be integrated into all institutions and departments… especially into the law enforcement structures… to take preventive measures, to ensure that citizens would become resilient", E8 said. E8 mentioned that there was an opportunity to work in Vilnius district (not the city of Vilnius), Visaginas and Šalčininkai districts where national minorities reside, the person said many people are pro-war and the state does nothing about it. "We try to engage in preventive measures, but our leadership prioritises issues like juvenile delinquency and smuggling" the responded added. When they engage with local community, people respond in Russian because these districts do not have Lithuanian language teachers who speak proper Lithuanian or are native speakers.

When it comes to the promotion of volunteering, SOCMIN does not provide any data nor progress on this goal. When taking a further look into the published strategic documents of the Ministry, their 2021-2030 "Programme for social recruitment" (or *Socialinės sutelkties programa* in Lithuanian) foresees to strengthen and develop voluntary activity within Lithuania (Ministry of Social Protection and Labour, 2021). However, E7 mentioned that SOCMIN is seeking for funding to promote volunteerism in Lithuania from international project and mention that successful partnerships are made with Norwegian and Swiss partners who see the importance of volunteering in democratic countries. In time of writing this, SOCMIN revels that they managed to achieve the target of 18% of Lithuanians participating in voluntary activities, however, no information was provided for the share of citizen participation in community activities. Promotion of volunteering seems to be done by NGOs themselves. E6 said that NGOs face significant challenges due to limited communication about the civil resistance strategy and the lack of funding. NGOs like this one try to promote civic values and contribute to the Strategy through events, training, and summer camps, but these activities are costly, and funding is scarce. E6 identified that applying for grants is an overly bureaucratic and time-consuming process, with little financial return. E6 added that there is lack of clarity within the Strategy which makes it difficult to align their efforts or apply for relevant support. This is also supported by E7 from SOCMIN who states that the Strategy did not appoint any additional funding to support NGOs for the enablement of Lithuanian people. E7 added that SOCMIN for instance could only financially assist 79 NGOs who filled an application and that is just one third of application received, meaning that the majority of applications were simply rejected due to the lack of funds.

Civil resistance. One of the most important steps to take when it comes to the role of citizens within total defence principle in Lithuania is preparing the citizens for civil resistance. Civil resistance and active participation of citizens are the cornerstone of Lithuania's total defence principle. Within the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of Lithuania for Civil Resistance a budget is provided (see Table 13) to prepare the Lithuanian citizens for non-violent and armed civil resistance. MINDEF supported LRU to effectively implement the Strategy and boost the civic will of Lithuanians. LRU received a large number of funds to prepare Lithuanians for civil resistance and the effective use of it reflects in the reports of their annual activity.

It is evident that LRU is a crucial entity who is enabled and made responsible for educating and preparing citizens for civil resistance besides MINDEF itself and MCRD. According to E4, they saw a spike of people joining their organisation and had to provide training to thousands of people, focusing on "basic fundamentals for new members," including first-aid skills and logistical support to military, which are the skills needed when preparing the population for civil resistance. The number of adult people becoming members of LRU increased slightly by 6.61% in 2021 compared to the figures in 2020, while in 2022 the number of adult members rose drastically reaching an increase of 42.96% compared to the figures in 2020.

Table 13. Funds assigned to civil resistance for the implementation of the Strategy (Information retrieved from Government of Lithuania, 2023).

	2023	**2024**	**2025**
Non-violent civil resistance	479.550 EUR	1,192.600 EUR	1,070.880 EUR
Armed civil resistance	14,909.700 EUR	17,200.600 EUR	19,199.600 EUR

The increased number of memberships still enabled them to conduct more non-kinetic training for civilians. The trainings for civilians were targeted to increase resilience against hybrid threats and teach practical survival skills, such as how to prepare food in harsh environments without proper tools. E5 from LRU added, that LRU contributes to the Strategy by educating school pupils and fulfilling the need to engage people in country's defence already from young age where they provide practical skills for youngsters how to provide first-aid, build shelters and camouflage oneself. Based on the information obtained from E4 and E5 from LRU, additionally, the members voluntarily engage with private companies and community groups to spread information about the organisation and citizen roles in civil resistance if they have the availability, however, they are not reimbursed for that.

Encountered challenges. While people joining LRU is increasing and they can uptrain more civilians for civil resistance, it is important to present the perspective of experts when it comes to faced challenges when implementing the Strategy. Based on the table below, E6 and E7 expressed funding issues when it comes to implementation of the Strategy from their part. Besides that, cultural and structural challenges are present too. The CMC being the coordinating body of the Strategy acknowledged gaps in regional engagement and NGO representation. E1 stressed that there is a need to create a visual map that would be accessible to public and which would show NGO engagement in regions and help Lithuania to address regional weaknesses by appointing additional attention to strengthen civic engagement. However, it is clear that no map is needed to see weak regions, as E8 said that they "would be first to go to the front line, which would likely be in Vilnius district (not the city of Vilnius) and Šalčininkai district, and the situation would be miserable" adding that there are no clear plans or coordinated efforts to address lacking inclusion of people in those regions. The responses reveal areas for improvement and they are all grouped into three groups in the below table.

Table 14. Identified challenges by experts of current implementation of the Strategy (created by the author).

Challenge category	Expert	Expert quote
Lack of budget	E6	"Applying for funding is bureaucratic, you spend a week or two on the application and the result is 1000 EUR, such amount doesn't cover anything".
	E7	"The Strategy did not foresee any additional funding for SOCMIN to distribute for NGOs and promote citizens to participate in voluntary activities".
Regional exclusion	E1	"A long-term goal to build trust in institutions especially at municipal level and strengthen community engagement which contributes to better societal resilience".
	E3	"Rural regions such as Southern Lithuania are more difficult to reach and engage citizens in our courses".
	E8	"The residents who are not ethnically Lithuanians support Putin and would not assist the border guards… Preventive measures against disinformation and propaganda are non-existent."
Personnel shortage	E2	"Currently, we have the resources and funding necessary, but the workforce is not sufficient to meet the increasing interest".
	E3	"The system for training instructors to implement the Strategy effectively is poor".
	E4	"Difficulty to keep up with the growing demand for training with limited personnel".
	E5	"We also have to contribute with our human resources to MCRD efforts."
	E6	"The Strategy seems to exist only on paper, with little functionality… Only a handful of lecturers available to cover the entire country".

Improvements for the Strategy. To address the mentioned challenges, participants suggested several improvements that could possibly be done by common efforts. The improvements could fill in the gaps that appeared just after less than two years of the implementation of the Strategy. The improvements from interviewed experts are portrayed in a categorised table below to show reoccurring patterns and common notions.

Table 15. Experts ' opinions for possible improvements of the Strategy (created by the author).

Improvement category	Expert	Expert insights
Use of media	E4	Recommended exploiting digital platforms, such as LT72.lt, to spread practical survival information because it helps countries to withstand aggression in the crucial 72-hour period.
Budget allocation	E7	Additional funding to SOCMIN would help enabling more NGOs to increase civic engagement and citizen empowerment.
Volunteering efforts	E1	Strengthening the value of "neighbourhood as a cohesive unit" in developing collective resilience.
	E2	Expressed the need to encourage participation in community activities and promote volunteerism.
	E6	Expressed the need for governmental institutions to communicate with NGOs who voluntarily contribute towards citizen preparation for civil resistance.
Inclusion of regions	E3	Vilnius district causes anxiety due to low participation as the potential front line would be there and citizens are not equipped with needed knowledge how to resist.

	E5	Recommends targeting regions further from cities and use traditional advertisement techniques as not everyone falls under the algorithms of social media.
	E6	Some communities lack exposure to Lithuanian language and culture, making civic education efforts nearly impossible, therefore, there is a need to add such measures into the Strategy targeting specific regions.
	E8	Recommends involving law enforcement institutions to help educate people in vulnerable regions inhabited by ethnic minorities.

To conclude, the results from conducting interviews reveal some great insights on the current implementation of the Strategy. While it is clear that the role of citizens within total defence in Lithuania emerge through their constitutional right and duty, it is important to address the main misconception of citizen perception that defence is only possible using a gun. Although, the secondary data together with experts' comments align that the public willingness to defend the country is increasing, further exploration reveals vulnerabilities such as the exclusion of certain regions and lack of attention to ethnic minorities. At the same time, there is a need to address funding to NGOs who foster civic will and contribute towards strengthening collective resilience by empowering individuals and at the same time fill in the personnel shortages experienced by MCRD and LRU when it comes to providing training for civilians.

3.4. Discussion of citizen role in the implementation of total defence in Lithuania

To begin with, the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance provides a blend of strengths and challenges when exploring Lithuania's dedication to improve overall resilience and prepare the citizens for civil resistance. In this discussion the project aims to combine the found knowledge from literature with the findings of conducted research and deem whether Lithuania is following objectives of the Strategy and identify challenges which could be addressed in the near future.

As found in literature, when exposed to the proximity of aggression, countries start amending their defence policies to meet the needs of defence sector (Neill et al., 2017). For example, Sweden's decision to revert back to total defence and focus on civil preparedness for civil resistance was influenced by the changed geopolitical climate and their reliance on military capabilities (Ericson et al., 2022). Similarly in Lithuania, the main motivator for the introduction of total defence principle and active citizen involvement in the implementation of defence policy was the changing geopolitical climate in the last decade and the war in Ukraine (Colby & Solomon, 2015; Janeliūnas, 2021; Thornton & Karagiannis, 2016). The universal application of total defence is widely spoken by Veebel & Ploom (2019) and Valtonen & Branders (2020) who emphasise the importance of total defence in engaging citizens to strengthen national resilience and referring to Finland as an example of a resilient country in Europe.

In essence, the Strategy indicates Lithuania's commitment in building a strong foundation for civil resistance which plays a critical role in the implementation of defence policy alongside the defence capabilities of armed forces and allies. The principle of total defence is embraced by not only enabling citizens but at the same time involving them and preparing them for civil resistance during peacetime stressing citizen constitutional right and duty to participate in the defence of Lithuania. This is supported by authors like Dudouet & Clark (2009), Sharp (2008;2012) and Stephan & Chenoweth (2008) who argue that citizens are the cornerstone of total defence principle. Countries who involve their citizens and enable them through civil resistance increase the chances of the whole country to resist effectively and also define a clear role for citizens to take part in country's defence.

Lithuania's approach to involve its citizens in the implementation of defence policy aligns with international practices where traditionally countries provide (1) civil resistance training incorporating non-violent actions (Sharp, 2008), (2) support for military resistance groups (Stringer, 2017) and (3) protection of critical infrastructure (Ericson, Svenbro & Wester 2022). The analysed Strategy defines the role of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle through the promotion of the constitutional right of citizens to defend their homeland and integrate civil resistance efforts with Armed Forces and NATO allies (Ministry of National Defence, 2016).

Analysis of normative and strategic documents together with data received from subject matter experts support the notion of Lithuania's changed and evolving defence policy, application of total defence and active citizen involvement through multiple instruments to increase their resilience and preparations for civil resistance. One of the strengths observed within the implementation of civil resistance strategy in Lithuania is the ambition to increase willingness of citizens to participate in national defence, in other words, to unify the nation to collectively protect national values, promote active participation in their local communities, prepare for civil resistance and defy the enemy. Thematic analysis revealed the role of citizens to participate in Lithuania's defence providing multiple alternatives to the common misconception of armed combat as the only way to participate in defence. Participated experts stated that the Strategy aims not only to equip citizens with essential survival skills but also challenge the narrow-minded approach of citizens when it comes to defence and actually enable them to contribute in multiple ways without a gun. The understanding of conventional war and sole reliance on military rather disregards the power of citizens. Randle (1993) and Lane (1997) provide the historic context of civil resistance during Prague's Spring, the Baltic Way and the Fall of Berlin Wall and their impact. In such way citizens can be directly involved in country's defence unconventionally. They stress that citizen involvement can relieve the military and other armed resistance groups and provide with an effective outcome, therefore, it is important for countries to come up with strategies which would enable citizens to participate in the implementation of defence policy.

However, during research, some challenges emerged. Although NGOs are not assigned directly to implement the Strategy, they still contribute to training civilians and preparing them for civil resistance. Their contribution is affected by limited resources, poor communication from governmental institutions and exclusion from the Strategy. The lack of resources is also identified by Lithuanian Riflemen's Union and Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department. They are short of personnel and cannot keep up with the increased training loads as they need instructors who could provide training to civilians. It can be argued that there should be more inclusion of NGOs in the implementation of the Strategy. Addressing the role of NGOs the Strategy could mitigate personnel shortages experienced by MCRD and LRU. By enabling NGOs who educate citizens about citizenship, develop national values and prepare citizens for civil resistance would positively help to implement the Strategy more effectively.

In literature, Roepke & Thankey (2024) talk about the importance of strengthening resilience as it can contribute to the effective withstanding of attacks, resistance against propaganda and hybrid threats. In the context of Lithuania, this is identified as a challenge, because the Lithuanian citizens lack understanding of their role within defence. Experts argued that this is affected by cultural and historic factors of underdevelopment of civic engagement. The lack of community spirit and low participation in volunteering activities is crucial to be addressed in the near future. At the same time experts argued that there is a need to promote volunteering so citizens would be more united and collective resilience would increase. However, if collective resilience is weak, the country may be

vulnerable. When spoken with experts it apparent that Lithuania fails to increase resilience in some regions such as the ones inhabited by national minorities. The minorities lack exposure to Lithuanian culture and language. This is alarming because the people in those districts are pro war and resilience in not developed. In a potential scenario where the front line is likely to be in the regions where national minorities live, those people without a doubt would not resist and would not help the Lithuanian resistance groups. Building resilience and strengthening the civic will during peacetime are the pillars for active citizen preparation for unexpected events and the constant stress on active citizen participation can be deemed as major value that should be developed in all regions of Lithuania to assure that citizens, no matter their ethnicity, will rise and form resistance groups. The obtained knowledge allows to reflect on the Strategy which is actually lacking a proper focus on the involvement of ethnic minorities and vulnerable regions. It appears that the Strategy needs to be reviewed before the second phase of the implementation to fill in this alarming gap and appoint measures to tackle the minority question.

The progress of implementing the Strategy is mixed. While MINDEF demonstrates advanced achievement of their goals, it is important to keep the momentum when going forward. There is still a need to increase the awareness of people of what do to during mobilisation as current number of only 34% of the population knowing how to act can jeopardise Lithuania and its vulnerable groups of people and even cost lives in times of aggression, therefore, it is important to actively work when implementing the Strategy and educating citizens. To add, pro-active spread of information online strengthens resilience and prepares citizens to resist a possible emergency. Creation of interactive websites helps to reach groups of people who can complete necessary training online, so at least they are informed in theory if they have no possibility to partake in physical training. As literature found, similar actions were taken in Finland, when it came to the preparation of population for possible aggression. Such measure can strengthen Lithuania's 72-hour survival capabilities.

Moreover, strengthening national identity and improving civic will through historical heritage activities and volunteering may appear as insignificant activities. However, these measures aim to educate the citizens of Lithuania about their national history to build and strengthen their identity which in result develop civic will. It also contributes to country's resilience to withstand whatever aggression and promotes Lithuanians to cooperate with one another as volunteering activities build that sense of belonging. The analysis of the annual report of ministries together with supporting secondary data shows that the Ministry of Culture achieved and exceeded their assigned goal in 2023 related to people's participation in historical heritage activities. Although the civic empowerment index was not achieved in time of writing this project in late 2024, it is still far from the target of 45 which needs to be achieved by 2025. Strengthening community bonds and civic will remains essential for developing and strengthening resilience (Sharp, 2008). Ministries should continue working in achieving what is expected and instructed by the Strategy, therefore, continued efforts to promote the collaboration between the communities and increasing volunteering among citizens is crucial as they are the foundation for civil resistance. Lastly, the progress of enabling LRU is promising. The membership numbers are rising so is the funding supporting their initiatives. The Riflemen's Union plays a critical role in the implementation of defence policy in Lithuania as they directly contribute to the preparation of citizens for civil resistance.

While this project provides valuable insights on the Strategy for Preparing Citizens of the Republic of Lithuania for Civil Resistance, a few limitations were encountered. First, as mentioned in the methodology, there was reliance on secondary data from governmental reports which introduced biases, because obvious challenges experienced by ministries were not mentioned in the reports.

Moreover, there was absence of complete data for the 2023 period in some reports of the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union which prevents assessing the full scope of progress. Additionally, the qualitative interviews were valuable, however, they were conducted with a limited group of subject matter experts. Such purposive sampling may have excluded alternative perspectives such as more NGOs who are directly affected by the implementation of the Strategy. To address the limitations of this project, further research could explore the involvement of vulnerable regions and ethnic minorities into Lithuania's implementation of defence policy as they demonstrate low levels of resilience. Additionally, the involvement on NGOs could also be further researched as it appears that officially they are not involved, however they play a significant role in preparing citizens for civil resistance. In such way, more recommendations could be presented to legislators to fill in these two gaps within the Strategy.

In conclusion, this research paper explores Lithuania's proactive approach to prepare citizens for civil resistance through the implementation of total defence principle. The results demonstrate increased participation in resilience-building trainings organised by MINDEF, increase in membership within LRU, the promotion of historical heritage to strengthen national identity, and the development of survival and civil resistance skills. As discussed earlier, such actions correspond to practices of other countries that promote collective resilience and citizen involvement in national defence. However, some challenges emerged especially with ethnic minorities, regional disparities and lack of volunteering and community participation. There is a need to involve NGOs who can contribute to developing civic will and reach regions who are further from cities to fill in the gaps in the current implementation of the Strategy. It is imperative to involve all citizens of Lithuania into defence capabilities and build resilience equally to all. As geopolitical climate is unstable, the results of this research contribute to broader understanding of national defence policies and the role of citizens within the principle of total defence. By researching Lithuania's total defence principle and citizen involvement, this project extends beyond Lithuania and offers an example to other countries to use when developing their resilience and strengthening unity when faced with potential threats.

Conclusions

1. This research project analysed a theoretical framework that framed citizens as a cornerstone of total defence by using examples of countries such as Finland, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. The examples of the mentioned countries and their historical context allowed to reveal the importance of citizens in defence sector and their role when defending their countries through resilience building, community bonds and civil resistance. The theoretical framework provides thorough understanding of total defence principle within explored countries' defence policies and how citizen involvement and their contribution shifts the reliance from military resistance groups and conventional perception of defence. By no means citizens are the only defenders of their respective countries, however, their enablement and employment in defence increases community resilience, resilience as a whole, deters aggression and improves security capabilities and society's readiness for potential emergencies. As role models, the analysed four countries show their best practices which can be adopted by other countries and in this instance Lithuania. As research found, changing geopolitical climate was a catalyst for Lithuania to change its defence policy by applying the principle of total defence. Similarly, as the Nordics and Switzerland, Lithuania started actively to involve citizens in the implementation of its defence policy instead of traditionally relying on its armed forces and NATO allies. The theoretical framework of this research unlocks a broader notion for understanding the value of enabling citizens to employ their role within total defence and collectively prepare for civil resistance during peacetime.
2. The legal environment revealed a number of documents aiming to integrate citizens in Lithuania's defence. The Constitution of Lithuania, Law on the Basics of National Security of the Republic of Lithuania, State Defence Plan and National Security Strategy depict citizen involvement within Lithuania's total defence principle as their constitutional right and duty. Such legal foundation goes hand in hand especially when geopolitical tensions are heightened and there is a potential threat in the proximity of the Baltic region. The analysed documents stress the importance of citizens to be active, protect national values and national identity, immerse themselves into local communities, at the same time prepare for civil resistance and by all means possible refuse the enemy. However, no matter the legislative efforts and listing the role of citizens within total defence, research finds that challenges regarding inclusivity emerge. Not only Lithuania finds it struggling to promote people's involvement within their local communities and strengthening civic will through volunteering, but the country's efforts also to build and strengthen resilience do not extend to regions farther from the capital city and regions inhabited by ethnic minorities. The lack of attention to certain groups and regions of Lithuania may undermine the current efforts and objectives to unify the country in the national defence framework.
3. Research on the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania based on strategic documents reveals that Lithuania provides survival skills to its citizens, actively tries to build resilience and prepares the citizens for civil resistance. The Strategy employs a few stakeholders unevenly of whom the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union and Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department emerge as core executive bodies of the Strategy while Crisis Management Centre who is under the Office of the Government is the coordinator. The project found that there is an increased citizen participation in civil resistance preparation activities which aim to boost public willingness to defend Lithuania. While the increase of people was anticipated, there is a human resource deficit that appeared shortly after the beginning of the

implementation of the Strategy. However, there is a lack of involvement of other societal groups and organisations. Research finds that NGO inclusion is inadequate knowing that active citizen participation, development of civic will and strengthening national identity are fostered through volunteerism. NGOs are not actively involved in the decision making or the implementation of the Strategy even though inclusion of NGOs especially those focusing on development of citizenship, civic will, building national identity and providing civil resistance skills could fill in the personnel shortages experienced by those completing trainings in Lithuanian Riflemen's Union or Mobilisation and Civil Resistance Department. Although the role of citizens within total defence was apparent within the Strategy, there is room for improvement when it comes to the role of other societal groups who may contribute to the enablement of the Lithuanian citizens.

4. Analysis of progress indicators to identify the progress of citizen involvement in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania shows mixed results. While some institutions such as the Lithuanian Riflemen's Union and Ministry of National Defence show progress in their goals related to the implementation of the Strategy, others such as SOCMIN do not. The progress of the Strategy shows that there is an increased public willingness to defend Lithuania, however, other metrics such as the Civic Empowerment Index or share of citizens participating in voluntary activities are still low. The latter two show that Lithuanian society faces sociocultural challenges which are present due to the historic and cultural past. The individuals do not feel empowered hence there is low community spirit. At the same, Lithuania does not demonstrate additional efforts to strengthen the NGO sector which contributes to civic empowerment. Additionally, the Strategy lacks engagement of districts inhabited by national minorities who appear to be marginalised. The research concludes that there are more efforts needed to address direct NGO inclusion to the implementation of the Strategy and ensure that all citizens regardless their location are included to national defence reducing the vulnerability of certain regions.

Recommendations

Based on the empirical part of this project where the involvement of citizens in the implementation of total defence principle in Lithuania and progress of the implementation of civil resistance strategy was defined, the following statements for concrete institutions are recommendations to consider in order to address the inefficiencies and improve the implementation of the Strategy.

The Seimas, Parliament of Lithuania

1. Prioritise the national minority question when it comes to building resilience by formally including measures directly targeting this population to the Strategy.

2. Amend the Strategy by foreseeing funding for the Ministry of Social Protection and Labour in order for them to enable more NGOs, increase volunteering among citizens and strengthen community bonds.

Ministry of National Defence of Lithuania

1. To seek human resources for MCRD and LRU as they experience personnel shortages when performing trainings for the citizens of Lithuania by collaborating with NGOs who focus on citizen education and preparation for civil resistance.

Crisis Management Centre

1. To act on the identified problem of national minority exclusion from the implementation of the Strategy by suggesting amendments to the legislative branch the Seimas to include measures to involve and educate ethnic minorities in Lithuania as priority when building resilience.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Civil resistance forms and actors in Lithuania

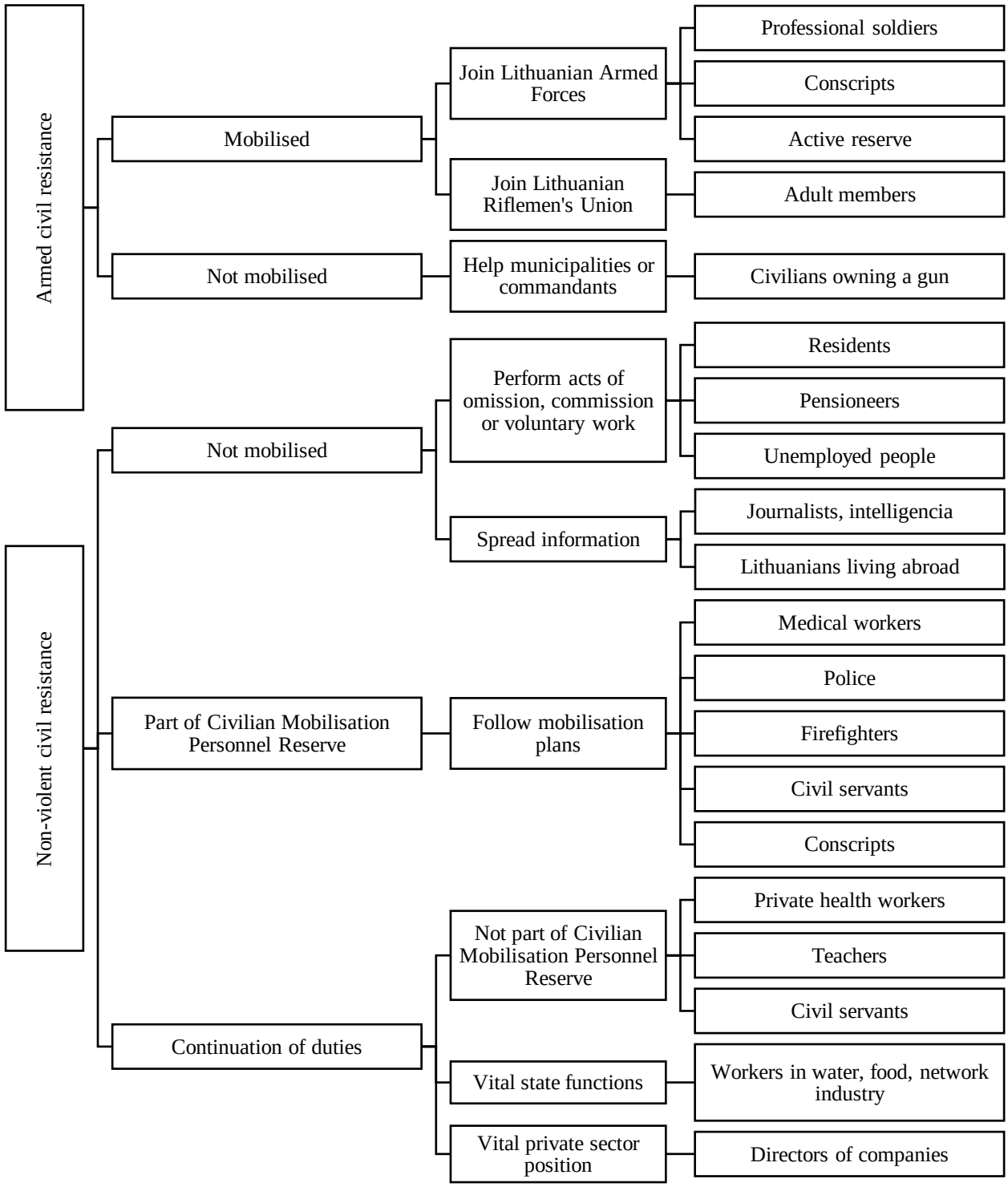

Fig. 13. Civil resistance forms and actors in Lithuania (Information retrieved from (Ministry of National Defence, 2024).

Appendix 2. Interview questions

Understanding the Strategy

1. How do you understand the goals and main objectives of the Strategy from your perspective?
2. How do you or your institution/organisation contribute to the Strategy?

Effectiveness of the Strategy

3. How effective do you think has the implementation of the Strategy been until now?
4. Can you provide a few examples of achievements do far when implementing the Strategy?

Citizen involvement

5. How would you evaluate the extent to which the citizens got involved in civil resistance preparation activities?
6. What steps have been taken to increase citizen participation in civil resistance activities?

Encountered challenges

7. What challenges have you encountered during the implementation of the Strategy?
8. Are there any tasks or objectives that were not implemented from the Strategy although were planned to? If yes, why?

Partnerships

9. How does your institution/organisation partner with other government agencies, NGOs, and the private sector to implement the Strategy?
10. Are there specific partnerships that you consider particularly effective or essential?

Future plans and recommendations

11. What future actions or initiatives are planned to strengthen the preparedness for civil resistance?
12. In your opinion, what improvements could be made to improve the Strategy's effectiveness?