LOWY INSTITUTE
ASIA POWER INDEX

2023
KEY FINDINGS REPORT

SUSANNAH PATTON
JACK SATO
HERVÉ LEMAHIEU

Table of contents

Published by LOWY INSTITUTE
31 Bligh Street
Sydney NSW 2000

ISBN 978-0-6480189-3-3 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-0-6480189-4-0 (PDF)

Project Lead: Susannah Patton
Methodology by Hervé Lemahieu
Key Findings by Susannah Patton and Jack Sato
Researchers: Jack Sato, Susannah Patton and Xuyang Dong

Cover and internal design by Ian Bruce.

The principal researchers would like to acknowledge the critical research, review, editorial and design contributions of Olivia Adams, Bonnie Bley, Ian Bruce, Anthony Bubalo, Clare Caldwell, Michael Fullilove, Harriet Goers, Stephen Hutchings, Alyssa Leng, Brody Smith, Alex Oliver and Roland Rajah on this project.

Introduction

The annual Asia Power Index — launched by the Lowy Institute in 2018 — measures resources and influence to rank the relative power of states in Asia. The project maps out the existing distribution of power as it stands today, and tracks shifts in the balance of power over time.

The Index ranks 26 countries and territories in terms of their capacity to shape their external environment — its scope reaching as far west as Pakistan, as far north as Russia, and as far into the Pacific as Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

The 2023 edition — which covers five years of data up to 2022 — is the most comprehensive assessment of the changing distribution of power in Asia to date.

The project evaluates international power in Asia through 133 indicators across eight thematic measures: Military Capability and Defence Networks, Economic Capability and Relationships, Diplomatic and Cultural Influence, as well as Resilience and Future Resources. More than half the data points involve original Lowy Institute research, while the rest are aggregated from hundreds of publicly available national and international sources.

This year, the Index includes three new indicators based on primary research that track high-level diplomatic engagement between all Index countries, enabling new comparisons of diplomatic and defence influence across Asia. These new indicators quantify the number of bilateral and multilateral diplomatic dialogues held at foreign minister level and above by each Index country, along with their convening power — the number of visits by regional leaders or foreign ministers hosted by each country.

Key findings in the 2023 Asia Power Index include:

1. China's isolation exacted a heavy toll on its standing in 2022 but the country emerges more militarily capable than ever.
2. The United States remains on top of the Asia Power Index due largely to China's setbacks.
3. The patchy power: India makes an uneven strategic contribution to the regional balance.
4. The clock is ticking on Japan's "smart power" influence.
5. Countries in the region are still suffering from "long Covid". Most are less resilient than prior to the pandemic.
6. Southeast Asia is more diplomatically dynamic than ever.
7. Russia, despite its legacy of defence ties with Asia, risks growing irrelevance.

DIGITAL PLATFORM

The Lowy Institute Asia Power Index is available through a specially designed digital platform that maximises both interactivity with the data and transparency of the methodology.

Dynamic features — including an interactive map, weightings calculator, network analysis, country comparisons and drill-down explorations of each indicator across multiple years and tens of thousands of data points — establish the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index as an indispensable research tool for the study of power globally.

Explore now: **power.lowyinstitute.org**

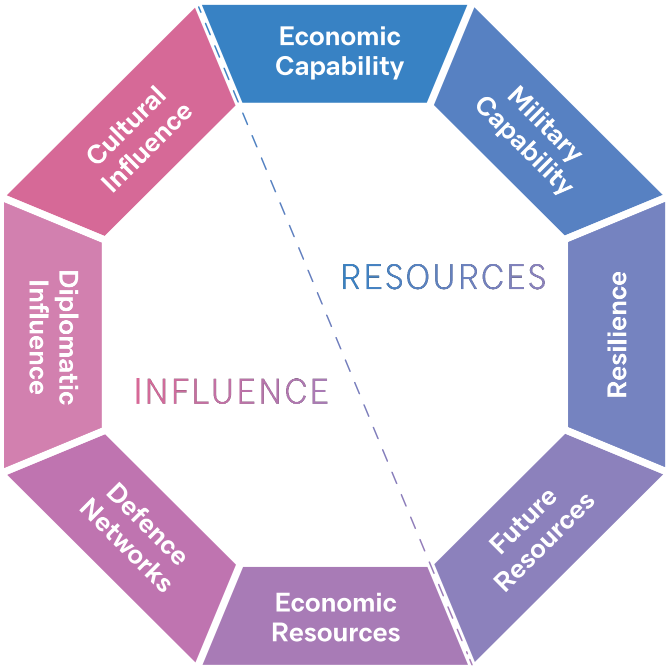
The Index measures the ability of states to shape and respond to their external environment.

Power is defined by the Index as the capacity of a state to direct or influence the behaviour of other states, non-state actors, and the course of international events.

Power can be measured in two ways. The Index distinguishes between resource-based determinants of power — in other words, what countries have — and influence-based determinants of power — what countries do with what they have.

RESOURCES — The first four measures of the Index — Economic Capability, Military Capability, Resilience and Future Resources — are prerequisite resources and capabilities for exercising power.

INFLUENCE — The next four measures — Economic Relationships, Defence Networks, Diplomatic Influence and Cultural Influence — assess levels of regional influence, lending the Index its geographical focus.



A country's comprehensive power is its weighted average across eight thematic measures of power:

Economic Capability
Core economic strength and the attributes of an economy with the most geopolitical relevance; measured in terms of GDP at purchasing power parity, international leverage, technological sophistication and global connectivity.

Military Capability
Conventional military strength; measured in terms of defence spending, armed forces and organisation, weapons and platforms, signature capabilities and Asian military posture.

Resilience
The capacity to deter real or potential external threats to state stability; measured in terms of internal institutional stability, resource security, geoeconomic security, geopolitical security and nuclear deterrence.

Future Resources
The projected distribution of future resources and capabilities, which play into perceptions of power today; measured in terms of estimated economic, defence and broad resources in 2030, as well as working-age population and labour dividend forecasts for 2050.

Economic Relationships
The capacity to exercise influence and leverage through regional economic interdependencies; measured in terms of trade relations, investment ties and economic diplomacy.

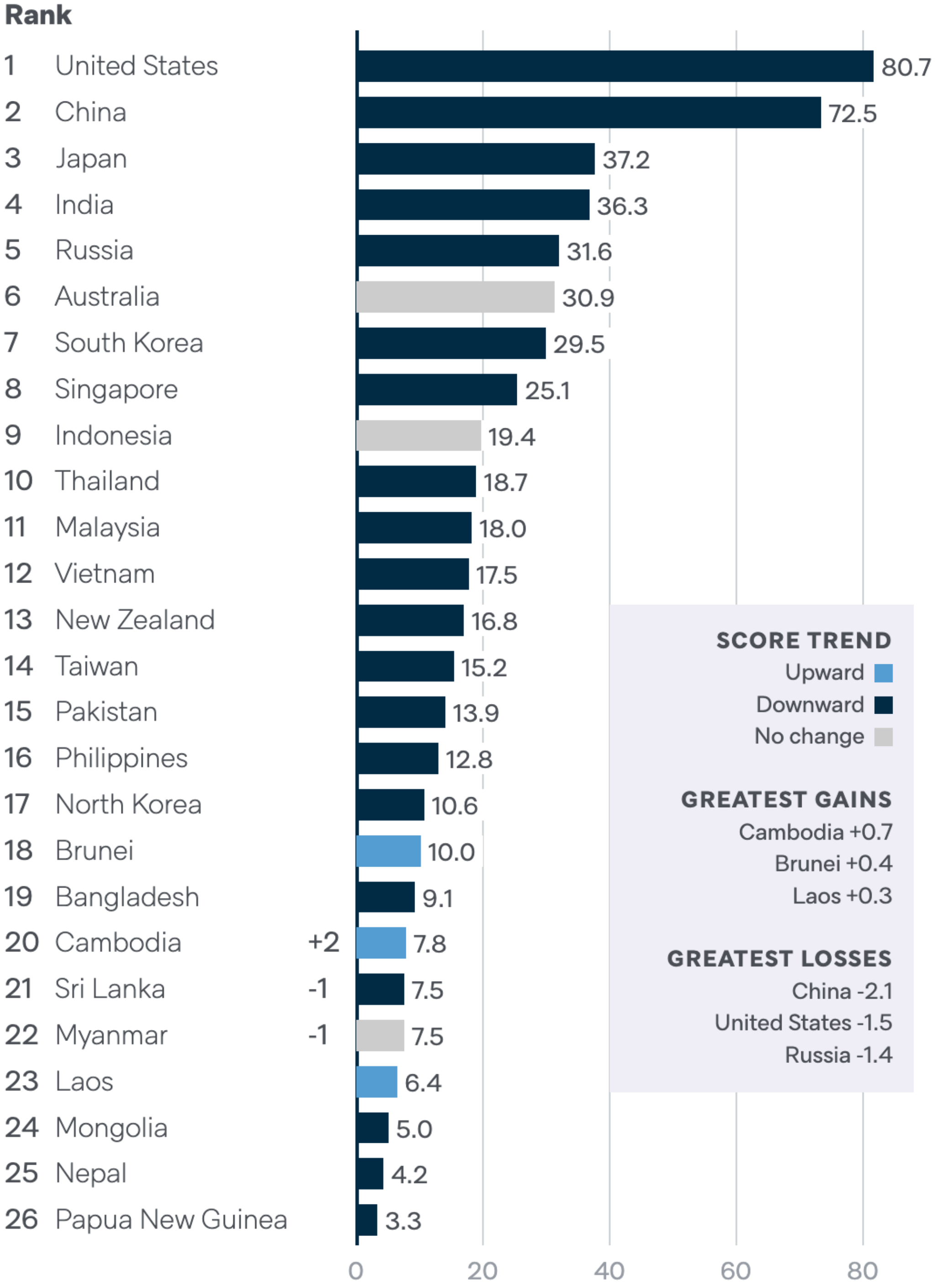
Defence Networks
Defence partnerships in Asia that act as force multipliers of autonomous military capability; measured through assessments of alliances, regional defence diplomacy and arms transfers.

Diplomatic Influence
The extent and standing of a state's foreign relations; measured in terms of diplomatic networks, involvement in multilateral institutions and clubs, and overall foreign policy and strategic ambition.

Cultural Influence
The ability to shape international public opinion through cultural appeal and interaction; measured in terms of cultural projection, information flows and people exchanges.

2023 Rankings

COMPREHENSIVE POWER



COMPREHENSIVE POWER

Rank		Country/Territory	Score	Trend	
1		United States	80.7	↘	**Superpowers** ≥ 70 points
2		China	72.5	↘	
3		Japan	37.2	↘	
4		India	36.3	↘	
5		Russia	31.6	↘	
6		Australia	30.9	–	
7		South Korea	29.5	↘	
8		Singapore	25.1	↘	
9		Indonesia	19.4	–	
10		Thailand	18.7	↘	**Middle powers** ≥ 10 points
11		Malaysia	18.0	↘	
12		Vietnam	17.5	↘	
13		New Zealand	16.8	↘	
14		Taiwan	15.2	↘	
15		Pakistan	13.9	↘	
16		Philippines	12.8	↘	
17		North Korea	10.6	↘	
18		Brunei*	10.0	↗	
19		Bangladesh	9.1	↘	
20	+2	Cambodia	7.8	↗	
21	-1	Sri Lanka	7.5	↘	
22	-1	Myanmar	7.5	–	**Minor powers** < 10 points
23		Laos	6.4	↗	
24		Mongolia	5.0	↘	
25		Nepal	4.2	↘	
26		Papua New Guinea	3.3	↘	

GREATEST GAINS
Cambodia +0.7
Brunei +0.4
Laos +0.3

GREATEST LOSSES
China -2.1
United States -1.5
Russia -1.4

*Brunei is classified as a minor power as its unrounded score is 9.98
Trend arrows track annual changes in scores above a minimum absolute change threshold (≥ 0.15)

Analysis

Shifting power in Asia: a five-year perspective

The Asia Power Index, now in its fifth year, reveals a region increasingly characterised by bipolar competition between two superpowers.

The portrait that emerges is this: China's overall power still lags the United States but is not far behind. According to theorists, a power transition is triggered when a rising power's overall strength approaches 80 per cent of that of the established power. The Asia Power Index showed in its inaugural edition that China had convincingly breached this threshold in 2018. Washington is unlikely ever to re-establish a decisive lead. The age of uncontested US primacy in Asia is over.

Yet the biggest surprise over the course of five editions of the Index has been China's inability to close or meaningfully narrow the gap to equal, let alone surpass, the United States in its comprehensive national power. The United States has maintained a narrow if durable edge as the leading superpower over the past half decade. Washington's own descriptor of Beijing as a near-peer competitor may hold indefinitely.

On current trends, China is now less likely to pull ahead of its rival in comprehensive power by the end of the decade. Even if it does in future decades, it appears highly unlikely China will ever be as dominant as the United States once was. China draws power from its central place in Asia's economic system. The United States draws its power from its military capability and unrivalled regional defence networks. Whether this uneasy co-habitation between unequal superpowers results in stability is an overriding regional and global concern. But what is clear is that a Sino-centric century is in arrested development.

Meanwhile, hopes of a multipolar regional system — classically defined as a balance of power between three or more major powers — appear misplaced. A widening gulf separates the United States and China from the region's next most important powers, Japan and India. Tokyo and New Delhi have suffered setbacks causing them to fall further behind Beijing and drop out of a special category of major powers, defined as countries with a comprehensive power greater than 40 points in the Asia Power Index, to the top end of the middle power grouping. Despite their different relative trajectories, both are uneven contributors to the regional balance of power.

Rather than a multipolar distribution of power, the Asia Power Index reveals Asia's "long tail" of middle powers. Each of these countries seeks at the margins to shape the regional order, even if none is powerful enough to dictate it. Smaller countries in the region must contend with the consequences of fading US strategic predominance and, for some, difficult relations with China. For those in Southeast Asia, this has resulted in more pronounced non-aligned strategies. Yet when neither the United States nor China can establish undisputed primacy in the region, the actions, choices and interests of smaller players will still matter for the emerging balance of power and the stability of the regional order.

Key Findings

China's self-imposed isolation exacted a heavy toll on its standing in 2022 but the country emerges more militarily capable than ever.

China registered the largest decline in comprehensive power of any country in the 2023 Asia Power Index. As much of the world lifted or relaxed strict measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19, China is only now emerging from tough zero-Covid policies that sharply curtailed its global and regional connectivity. This saw the connective tissue of its relationships with its neighbourhood — people exchanges, business links and cultural ties — atrophy.

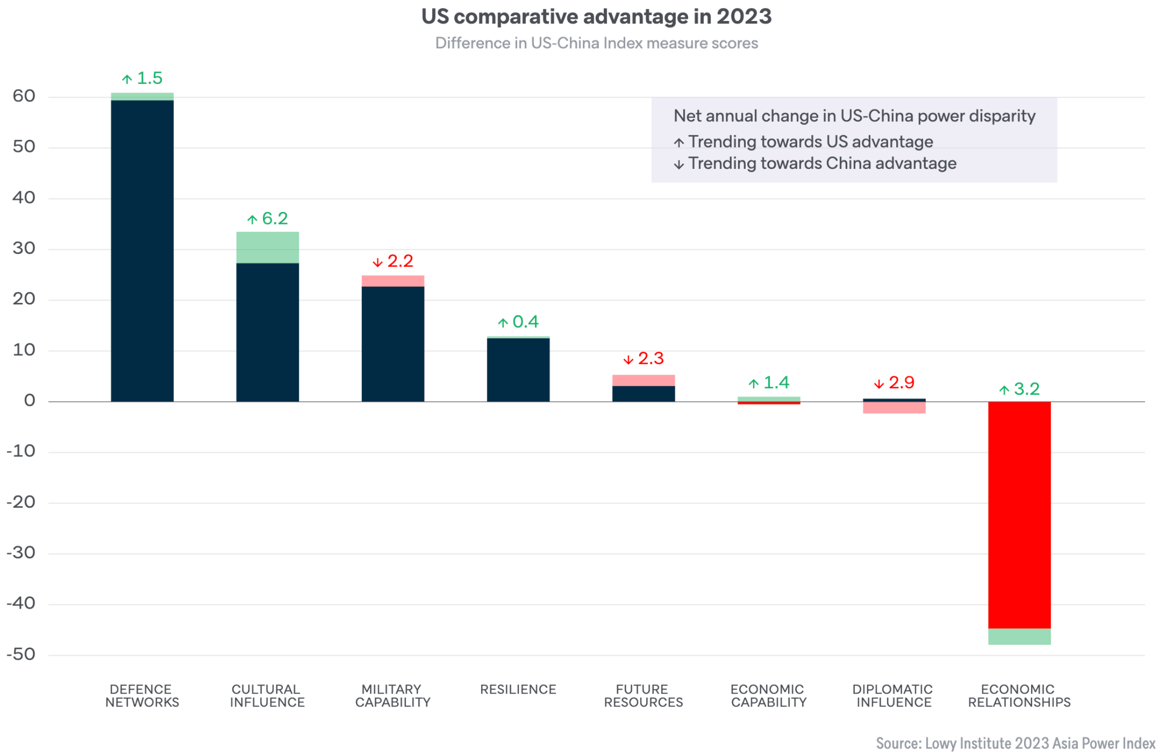
People-to-people connectivity between China and other countries in Asia declined sharply due to Beijing's prolonged restrictive Covid travel measures. Air traffic in and out of China remained far below pre-pandemic levels; only around half of the direct routes from Beijing's international airport were operational in 2022. And while China is still the best connected country to the rest of Asia through direct international flight routes, flights arriving in the country were operating at chronic under-capacity last year. China experienced a far more dramatic decline in international arrivals than any other country in Asia.

In parallel with this trend, China's economic linkages with the world became less robust. While China attracted more than US$200 billion of foreign capital investment in the three-year period to 2021, this had fallen to just US$120 billion in the three years to 2022. The country's global outward investment flows also declined by around 30 per cent. While China's global exports remained strong, the country's demand for imports of goods and services weakened due to relatively tepid economic growth in 2022.

As a result, China's Economic Capability — a measure of core economic strength and ability to use the economy to geopolitical advantage — is at its lowest level since 2018, with the United States again leading on this measure.

Challenging the United States without catching up

Findings from the Asia Power Index suggest that China may never tip the balance of power decisively in its favour and supplant the United States.



As Lowy Institute research has shown, even if China becomes the world's largest economy, it faces a long-term slowdown in its economic growth, meaning it may never establish a meaningful lead over the United States. The 2023 Asia Power Index confirms this outlook.

Yet China need not fully catch up to or overtake the United States to challenge US power in Asia or impinge on the interests of smaller neighbours. China is steadily improving its Military Capability — closing the gap with the United States from 27 points in 2018 to 23 points in 2022.

In 2022, China deployed these capabilities more assertively, in the South China Sea, on its border with India, and in response to former US speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. China's extensive military drills around Taiwan were designed to test the People's Liberation Army and Taiwanese responses, but also to establish a "new normal" with repeated incursions by Chinese military aircraft across the so-called median line of the Taiwan Strait.

An important explanation for China's military posturing may be that while it remains less powerful than the United States, its relative lead over its neighbours — including India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines — continues to grow.

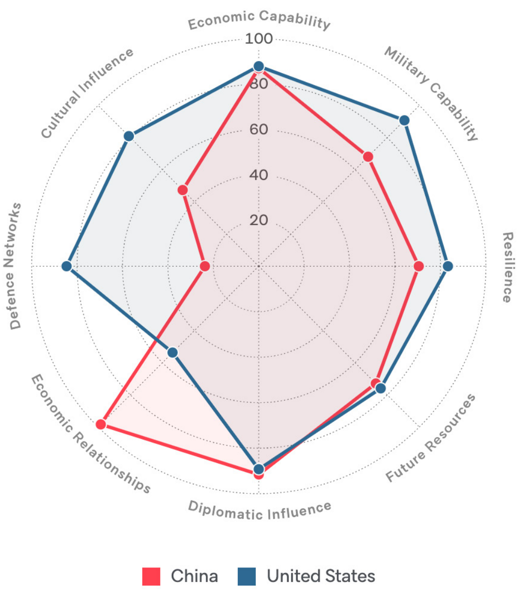
In parallel, and despite Covid-related travel restrictions, China narrowly reclaimed pole position for Diplomatic Influence from the United States in 2022. While Australia experienced a protracted freeze in ties with China, this was the exception, rather than the rule in Asia. China maintained a constant tempo of diplomatic activity, particularly in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, where it pursues both interactions with foreign ministers as well as relationships of influence with diverse political actors. These engagements saw it make concrete gains in 2022, including beginning works at Ream Naval Base in Cambodia where it may seek to establish a permanent military presence.

A more formidable opponent in 2023

China experienced an annus horribilis in 2022, with its strict Covid policies hampering its ability to compete effectively in Asia. It also encountered diplomatic pushback, especially from US allies. Even so, its willingness to assert its weight in Asia suggests that the United States and its allies should not take too much comfort from Washington's continued lead over Beijing. While China's abrupt shift away from zero-Covid poses its own challenges, reopening in 2023 may be an important window of opportunity for it to regain its traditional advantages in Asia: proximity and connectivity.

United States — China

Comprehensive power in 2023



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

The United States remains on top of the Asia Power Index due largely to China's setbacks.

The United States maintains an enduring advantage as the most powerful country in Asia and widened its lead slightly over China for a second year running despite a continuing downward trend for its comprehensive power score, which has never replicated its peak of 2018.

The superpower remains in pole position in six of the eight measures of power, having regained the top spot for Economic Capability, but lost out to China on Diplomatic Influence in 2022. The United States registered annual gains for its unsurpassed Defence Networks and — albeit from a very low base — for its Economic Relationships in the region.

A modest 2022 uptick in US economic influence defies an enduring downward trend in a dimension of power that has long been America's weakest link in Asia. This partial reversal is due to growth in US trade with the region off the back of a strong domestic economy and the United States displacing India as a top investor in two South Asian economies: Bangladesh and Nepal. However, the annual gain does little to recover the lost ground in US economic relationships over five years. Nor will it do much to challenge China's decisive lead in the same measure. The improved standing was also partially offset by Washington's absence from new free trade agreements, including the ASEAN-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, which entered into force in 2022 and includes some of the largest regional economies: China, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea.

> *"The superpower remains in pole position in six of the eight measures of power, having regained the top spot for Economic Capability, but lost out to China on Diplomatic Influence in 2022."*

Diplomatic and defence engagement

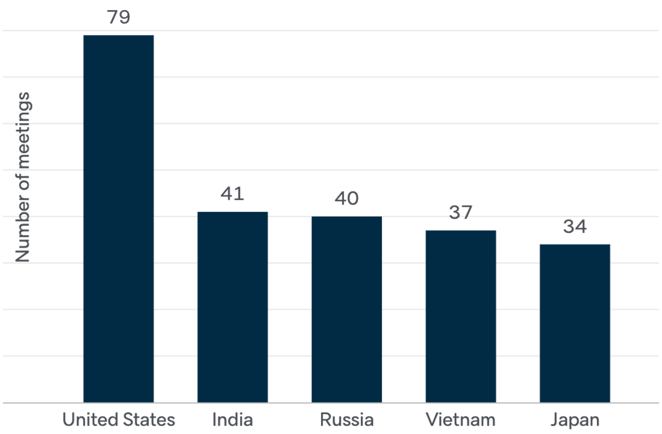
The Index's mid-year survey of foreign policy experts gave the Biden administration a mixed report card. While the United States ranked first for its global leadership, it rated just ninth for the efficacy of its political leaders in advancing US interests in Asia, down from fourth in 2021. The Biden administration has elevated the Quad with Australia, India and Japan to a leadership-level dialogue, committed to the AUKUS technology sharing partnership with the United Kingdom and Australia and launched the US Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Yet this low score likely reflects concerns about the "say-do gap" in America's approach to Asia, referring to a perceived discrepancy between what Washington says and what it does in practice.

Three new indicators, included in the Asia Power Index for the first time, cast light on how Washington's diplomatic approach in Asia measures up. These indicators of elite diplomatic engagement suggest that former Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi more actively courted counterparts in Asia than US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Despite its strict Covid protocols in the period, China still hosted more leaders and foreign ministers from Asia in 2021 than any other country. The United States ranked third in this indicator. This discrepancy reflects Washington's tendency to invest more deeply in a narrower set of alliances, while Beijing has shallower relationships with a broader set of partners.

Defence Networks are an enduring US advantage in Asia, and the Biden administration has consolidated this asset by stepping up regional defence diplomacy. It nearly quadrupled the number of bilateral defence dialogues held with counterparts in the Indo-Pacific as compared to the last year of the Trump administration, and expanded combined training, especially with alliance partners and to a lesser extent with non-allied partners. The reaffirmation of the Visiting Forces Agreement between the United States and the Philippines in 2021 enabled a larger number of combined trainings than in previous years.

Defence dialogues (bilateral)

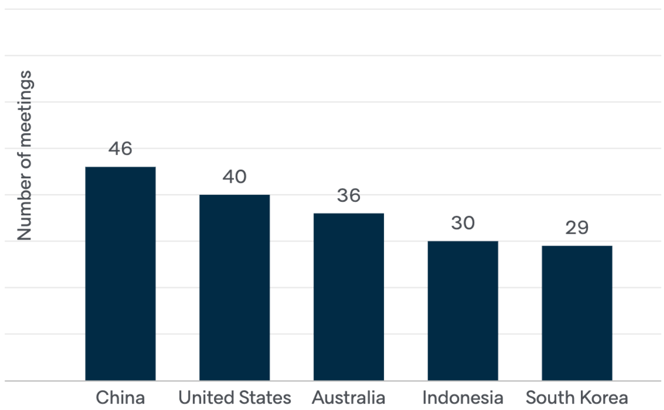
The five most active Asia Power Index countries in bilateral defence ministers or senior officials meetings (2021)



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

Diplomatic dialogues (bilateral)

The five most active Asia Power Index countries in bilateral diplomacy between leaders or foreign ministers (2021)



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

The patchy power: India makes an uneven strategic contribution to the regional balance.

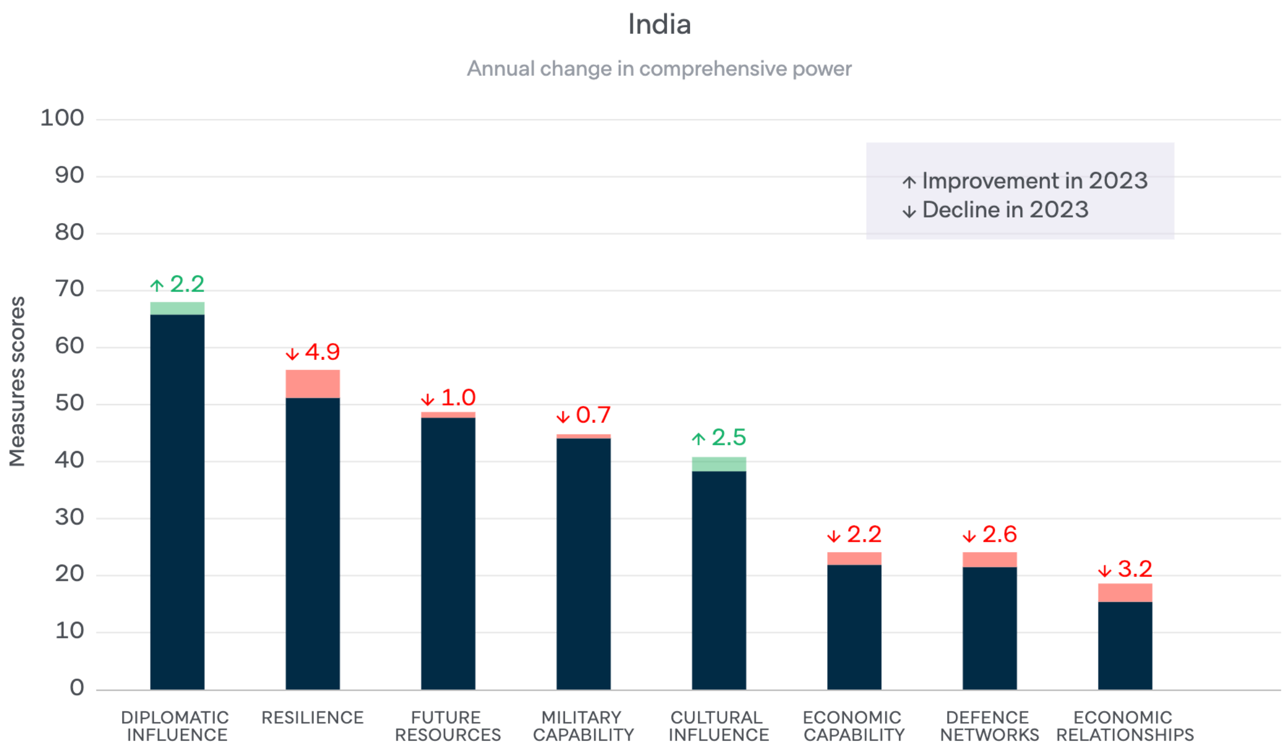
After the region's two superpowers — China and the United States — Japan and India are the most powerful countries in Asia. Yet both Tokyo and New Delhi have suffered setbacks in recent years that have seen them drop out of a special category of major powers, defined as countries with a comprehensive power greater than 40 points in the Asia Power Index, to the top end of the middle power grouping.

India remains an uneven contributor to the regional balance of power and continues to underperform relative to its resources.

New Delhi's Diplomatic Influence rose by one ranking to finish fourth overall in 2022, with experts rating it highly for its leaders' ability to prosecute the country's national interests both in Asia and on the global stage.

But the Asia Power Index presents a mixed picture on India's prospects. India scores highly in the Future Resources measure, reflecting its likely greater share of economic, military and demographic weight in the decades to come.

Yet the gap between India's resources and its influence in Asia is growing. Since 2018, the Asia Power Index has measured each country's "Power Gap" — a country's actual power as compared to its potential given its available resources. This analysis reveals India to be an under-achiever, performing less well than would be expected based on its size and available resources. Despite a small uptick in 2022, India's Power Gap has on balance deteriorated over five years, and now stands at -2.8 points.



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

Assessing India's likely future influence in Asia then, is challenging. Its sheer size means the country is almost certainly destined to be a major power behind only the United States and China. Although New Delhi is outside the US alliance network, its interests in balancing China overlap with those of Washington, including through the Quad partnership with Australia and Japan. Yet India's influence remains concentrated in South Asia, and it is not clear what role if any India would play in relation to key flashpoints in East Asia.

India's influence is also weighted towards security ties, highlighted in 2022 by its agreement to sell BrahMos anti-ship missiles to the Philippines. Its diplomatic service continues to receive lacklustre marks from the Asia Power Index survey of experts, ranking tenth in the region, the same as in 2018. And India's economic ties with the region, reflected in its absence from regional trade agreements and its displacement by the United States and China as a top investor and trade partner for several South Asian neighbours in recent years, hamper its influence. India ranks just ninth for Economic Relationships in Asia and has gone backwards in this measure every year since 2018. Its choice in 2022 to absent itself from the trade pillar of the US Indo-Pacific Economic Framework will only cement this position.

"India ranks just ninth for Economic Relationships in Asia and has gone backwards in this measure every year since 2018."

The clock is ticking on Japan's "smart power" influence.

Japan — described in previous editions of the Asia Power Index as the "quintessential smart power" — will not be able to outsmart its declining power resources forever. Japan's positive Power Gap, or the extent to which its influence outstrips its resources, has declined steadily since 2018.

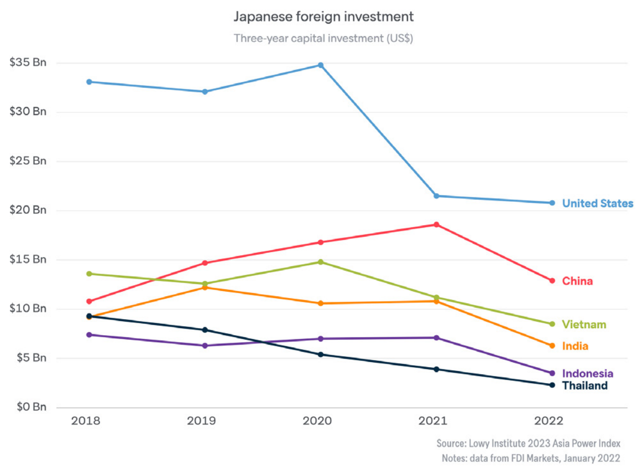
The fundamental factors underpinning Japan's influence in Asia over recent decades — wealth, economic size and technological edge — are weakening. Japan's economic capability has declined steadily since 2018, with the country suffering low GDP growth and facing long-term structural challenges, including an ageing and rapidly shrinking workforce. In 2022, Japan lost six points in the technology sub-measure due to a relative decline in investment in research and development.

Tellingly, the Asia Power Index shows that Tokyo's relative influence is contracting even faster than its resources, suggesting that Japan's legacy influence in the region may be on borrowed time. The most substantial contraction of Japanese influence has been in its economic relationships with the region, long its strong suit. Here, Japan has lost 16 points since 2018. Japan's economic diplomacy sub-measure score increased in 2023, indicating that it is still active in regional free trade agreements and in providing development assistance. However, Japan is now a less important source of foreign investment in the region than it was in 2018. To a lesser extent, Japan's cultural and diplomatic influences in Asia are also trending downwards.

> *"Japan's emergence as a fully-fledged regional security actor is not happening quickly or decisively enough to compensate for its declining advantage in traditional areas of economic and cultural influence."*

Even as some of Japan's traditional advantages erode, it is slowly starting to emerge as a more prominent regional security actor — an area in which it has long fallen short — in line with policies pursued vigorously by former prime minister Shinzo Abe. In 2022, for the first time in half a decade, Japan recorded a small improvement in its Military Capability score. And although it recorded a negative change in its Defence Networks in 2022, in previous years it has consistently expanded its defence networks through greater participation in joint training and defence dialogues with regional partners, especially the United States and Australia, with which it signed a reciprocal defence access agreement in 2022.

Yet Japan's emergence as a fully-fledged regional security actor is not happening quickly or decisively enough to compensate for its declining advantage in traditional areas of economic and cultural influence. This means that, as for India, Japan's contribution to a collective balancing strategy in response to China's rise may be less than the United States hopes.



Countries in the region are still suffering from "long Covid". Most are less resilient than prior to the pandemic.

For most countries, the acute impacts of Covid-19 such as lockdowns and border closures have eased, yet the long-term effects of the pandemic continue to hold back countries.

Only two Index countries have higher comprehensive power scores in 2022 than they did prior to the pandemic in 2019. This means that few powers are as able to influence the international environment in their favour as they were prior to the pandemic.

Despite widespread reopening in 2022, this trend continued, with just three out of 26 countries meaningfully improving their comprehensive power scores in 2022 on the preceding year. The region's largest players suffered the largest decreases in overall power, led by China, the United States, Russia, India and Japan.

Australia was the least affected middle power overall by the pandemic. Alone among regional advanced economies, and despite a drop in regional influence during nearly two years of strict border closures, the country's comprehensive power is now approximately back to its pre-pandemic level. By contrast, other top-ten countries in the power ranking have lost more than three points each on average on their pre-pandemic standing. This places Australia within one point of matching Russia as the fifth-ranked country in the Asia Power Index, having already overtaken South Korea in sixth place in 2020.

The Asia Power Index data also underlines the uneven distribution and timing of Covid impacts on national power across the region over the past three years: while US standing in the region suffered most acutely in 2020, China experienced deeper and prolonged impacts from its self-imposed isolation in 2021 and 2022. Despite contrasting approaches in their handling of the pandemic, both superpowers have lost approximately 3.5 points each on their pre-pandemic comprehensive power.

Changes in comprehensive power

Year-on-year points changes in comprehensive power

Country	2020	2021	2023	(2020-2023)
	Annual changes			Three-year net change
Japan	-1.5	-2.4	-1.4	-5.3
Malaysia	-2.1	-2.4	-0.3	-4.8
India	-1.3	-2.0	-1.4	-4.7
United States	-3.0	0.6	-1.5	-3.8
Russia	-1.8	-0.5	-1.4	-3.8
China	0.1	-1.5	-2.1	-3.5
North Korea	-1.6	-0.8	-0.8	-3.3
South Korea	-1.1	-1.6	-0.5	-3.2
New Zealand	-0.8	-1.2	-1.0	-3.0
Singapore	-0.4	-1.2	-1.1	-2.8
Thailand	0.1	-1.7	-0.4	-2.0
Pakistan	-0.1	-0.5	-0.8	-1.5
Myanmar	-0.2	-1.3	0.1	-1.4
Mongolia	-0.5	0.0	-0.7	-1.2
Indonesia	-0.7	-0.5	0.0	-1.1
Sri Lanka	-0.3	0.3	-1.1	-1.0
Philippines	-0.4	-0.2	-0.4	-1.0
Taiwan	0.8	-0.5	-0.9	-0.6
Bangladesh	-0.5	0.2	-0.3	-0.6
Nepal	-0.2	0.0	-0.3	-0.5
Vietnam	1.3	-1.0	-0.8	-0.5
Australia	1.1	-1.6	0.1	-0.4
Laos	-0.4	0.0	0.3	-0.1
Cambodia	-0.4	-0.2	0.7	0.1
Brunei	-0.0	0.5	0.4	0.8

Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

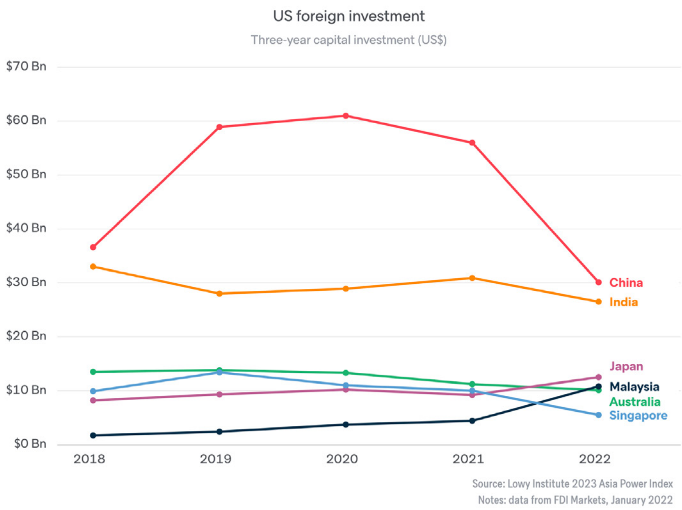
Weakening economic security

Most countries registered declining resilience in 2022 due to weaker geoeconomic security. Despite concerns about the risks of economic coercion, a majority of countries became more dependent on their primary trade partner, in many cases China. Many countries also experienced declines in the diversity of their export markets and products while simultaneously becoming more dependent on trade as a percent of their GDP, resulting in lower scores across the board for geoeconomic security.

However, an embattled rules-based trading system continues to be a source of resilience for trade-dependent countries. For example, damage wrought by China's trade restrictions on sectors of the Australian economy since 2020 was largely offset by trade diversion as a result of the country's access to alternative markets and participation in the global trading system.

> *"The region's largest players suffered the largest decreases in overall power, led by China, the United States, Russia, India and Japan."*

The Asia Power Index also identifies a trend of greater reliance on China for foreign direct investment in the region. China has accounted for a higher average share of foreign investment in Index countries every year since 2018. In 2022, China accounted for an average 22 per cent share of foreign investment in Asia Power Index countries (based on ten-year cumulative flows).



Relatedly, the Asia Power Index offers scant evidence to support a trend of "friend shoring" — that is, the United States seeking to redirect investment away from "unfriendly" countries such as China and towards allies and partners. The United States still invests more in China than in India (measured in terms of three-year cumulative outflows) and has not markedly increased investment in allied countries such as Japan or Australia. For now, decoupling appears to be limited to select frontier technologies — such as the semiconductor supply chain — rather than a wider restructuring of regional economic ties.

Southeast Asia is more diplomatically dynamic than ever.

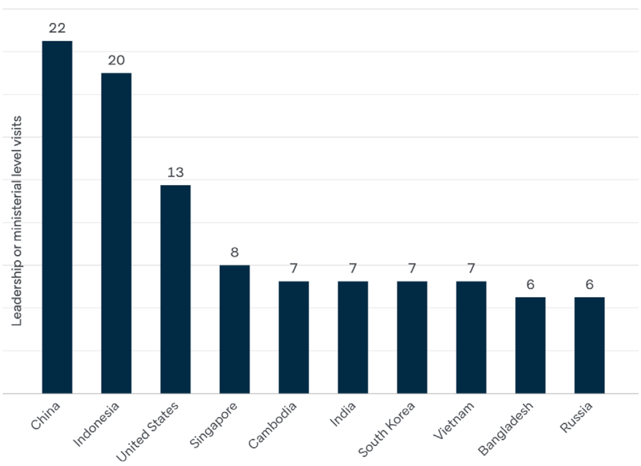
Much commentary about the Indo-Pacific portrays Southeast Asia as having a weak centre of gravity, in which countries are unable to navigate rising major power competition or internal challenges such as the violent conflicts consuming Myanmar. The Asia Power Index challenges this narrative, demonstrating the continued dynamism and influence of even small Southeast Asian countries.

Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest country in terms of both economic size and population, maintained its position in the top ten powers in Asia.

While Indonesia is often criticised for exercising weak leadership within ASEAN, new indicators measuring patterns of diplomatic engagement show the country of 270 million to be among the region's most diplomatically active players. Jakarta hosted the second-largest number of foreign leaders or foreign ministers in 2021, and Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi is a sought-after interlocutor in Southeast Asia and beyond. In 2022, Indonesian President Joko Widodo sought to play a role in mediating conflict between Russia and Ukraine and successfully hosted the G20 in challenging geopolitical circumstances. This greater level of ambition resulted in improved expert survey scores for Indonesia's leadership at both the regional and global levels in 2022.

Diplomatic convening power

Asia Power Index countries hosting the most visits from regional leaders or foreign ministers (2021)



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

Southeast Asia's smaller powers

Among smaller Southeast Asian countries, both Brunei (ASEAN chair in 2021) and Cambodia (ASEAN chair in 2022) have been upside surprises in their chairing of the regional organisation. This has resulted in greatly improved ratings for both countries in the annual expert survey of Diplomatic Influence. In 2021, Brunei managed to secure important compromises that kept ASEAN relatively unified on Myanmar. As the 2022 chair, Cambodia avoided repeating the failings of its 2012 chairing of ASEAN, when it leant heavily towards China. Other recent ASEAN chairs, such as Singapore and Thailand, have not experienced a similar uptick in influence, suggesting that the benefits of chairing ASEAN accrue most to the region's smallest players.

Yet the picture across Southeast Asia is not uniform. Despite the ambition of other ASEAN countries — including Indonesia and Malaysia — to take a tougher than usual stance towards Myanmar, the military junta appears unreceptive to external pressure and likely to become increasingly isolated.

Laos is the only ASEAN country to record a lower comprehensive power score than Myanmar and continues to suffer declining economic capability. In 2022, Laos faced a balance of payments crisis, the result of growing indebtedness and high global commodity prices.

Diplomatic Influence of Southeast Asian countries (2023)

Country	Sub-regional rank	Score
Indonesia	1	60.4
Vietnam	2	55.2
Singapore	3	52.9
Thailand	4	48.3
Malaysia	5	43.8
Philippines	6	37.1
Brunei	7	32.7
Cambodia	8	32.5
Laos	9	27.3
Myanmar	10	24.6

Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

Note: Rank among Southeast Asian countries. Excludes non Southeast Asian Index countries

Russia, despite its legacy of defence ties with Asia, risks growing irrelevance.

Russia continues to rank as the fifth-most powerful country in Asia, a position it has occupied since 2018, though its influence is lopsided and declining. This ranking is heavily skewed by Russia's Military Capability, a measure on which it still ranks third after only the United States and China. Relatedly, Russia has strong Defence Networks with partners in Asia including India and Vietnam, based on defence procurement relationships dating back to the Cold War. While several Index countries have prominently opposed Russia's invasion of Ukraine, lukewarm condemnations by others in 2022 highlight the political salience of Moscow's defence ties in the region.

Russia registered a decrease in comprehensive power in Asia for a third consecutive year, as well as declining scores for six out of the eight measures of power. Notably, Russia recorded a steep decline of four places in its Diplomatic Influence ranking in 2022 — reflecting Moscow's loss of reputation and its strategic preoccupation with the invasion of Ukraine — accelerating a downward trend for Diplomatic Influence since 2018. Its Economic Relationships with the region are negligible, with the country registering a lower score on that measure than New Zealand.

Because of its over-reliance on military power, one consequence of Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a likely further decline in its future power in Asia. Russia's invasion will probably cause both its overall Military Capability and its Defence Networks in Asia to atrophy. Moscow will find it difficult to sustain arms transfers to partners in Asia given the heavy impact of the Ukraine conflict on its military-industrial capacity. And while its strategic dependence on China is growing, its broader regional influence is likely to continue to decline. The possible exception to this trend is Myanmar, where international isolation has pushed the military junta to pursue closer ties with Moscow. Russia is Myanmar's top partner for defence dialogues in the 2023 Asia Power Index.

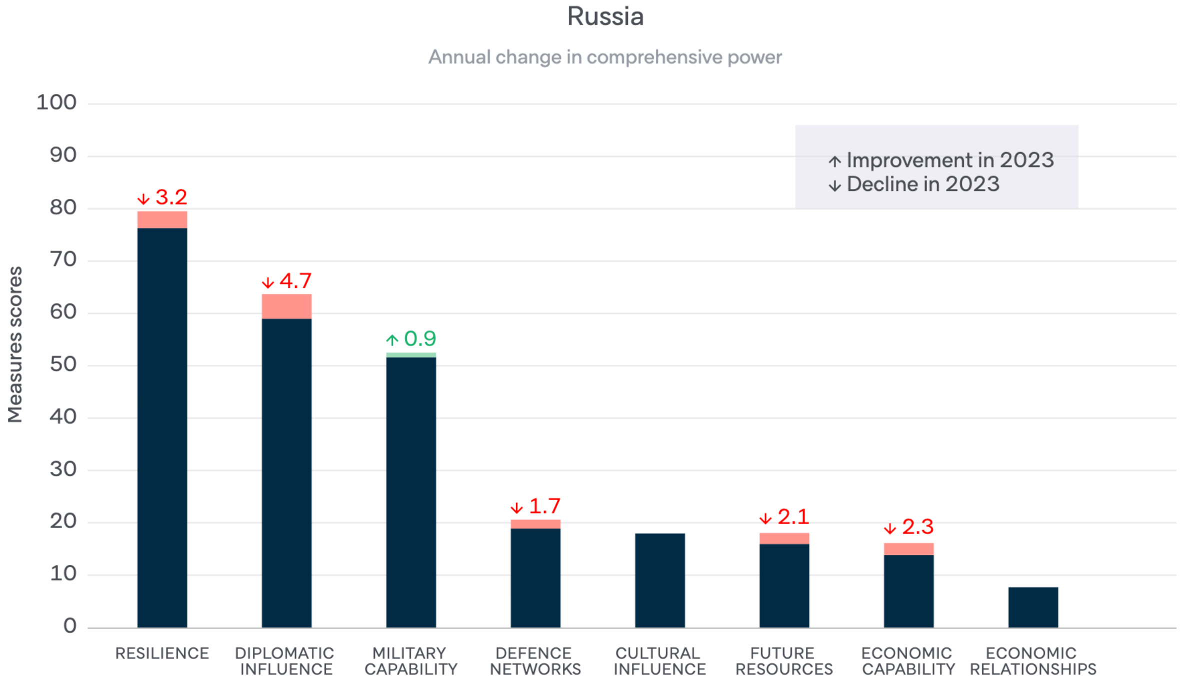
Another aspect of Russia's regional ties, its role as an important source of tourists, was interrupted in 2022. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, post-Covid tourism recovery from Russia halted and international flight connections between Russia and the world, including Asia, plummeted as Russian tourists were affected by international sanctions and an inability to convert currency. Russian tourism to limited destinations in Asia has now recommenced.

> *"Russia recorded a steep decline of more than four places in its Diplomatic Influence ranking in 2022 — reflecting Moscow's loss of reputation and its strategic preoccupation with the invasion of Ukraine."*

The outlook for Russia's power in Asia

Russia's resources are not matched by influence in Asia, reflected in a sizeable negative Power Gap only fractionally ahead of North Korea. This illustrates Russia's position at the geographic and diplomatic periphery, rather than the centre of power in Asia, despite its membership of many regional organisations such as APEC and the East Asia Summit. It also bodes poorly for any Russian plan to shore up ties with Asia as a pathway to reviving its economic fortunes after the invasion of Ukraine.

In this year's Asia Power Index, Russia recorded a lower score for resource security, the result of declining net exports of fuel even before its invasion of Ukraine and the imposition of Western sanctions on its energy industry. However, Russia remained first-ranked for resource security in 2022, and its overall score for Resilience (second only to the United States) suggests that it still has a strong ability to withstand international opprobrium.



Source: Lowy Institute 2023 Asia Power Index

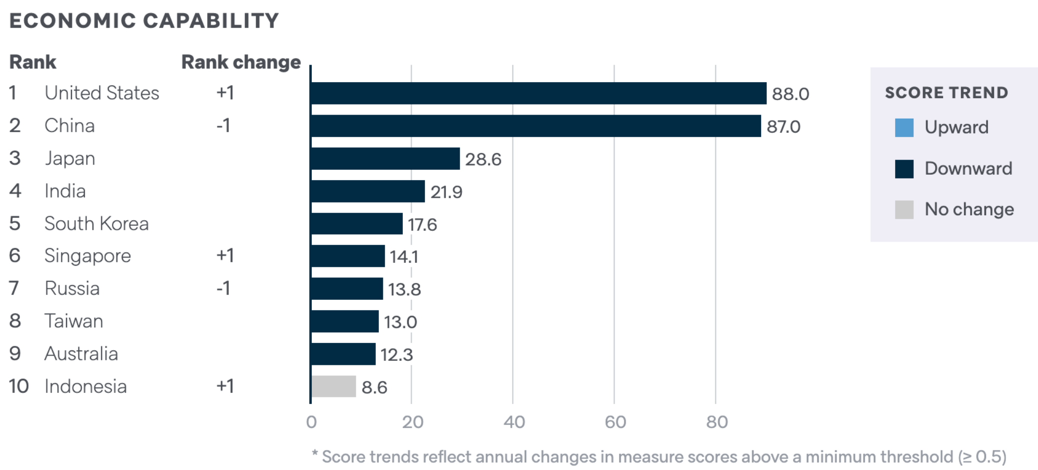
Measures of Power

A country's comprehensive power is calculated as a weighted average across eight measures of power, each of which aggregates data from three to five distinct sub-measures.

The Index's measures and sub-measures seek to capture the diverse qualities that enable countries to pursue favourable geopolitical outcomes, as well as to shape and respond to their external environment.

ECONOMIC CAPABILITY

Core economic strength and the attributes of an economy with the most geopolitical relevance; measured in terms of GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP), international leverage, technological sophistication and global connectivity.



Size: The economic weight of a country as reflected by its GDP, which is the total value of all final goods and services produced annually within an economy. Purchasing power parity exchange rates are used to allow for a reliable comparison of real levels of production between countries.

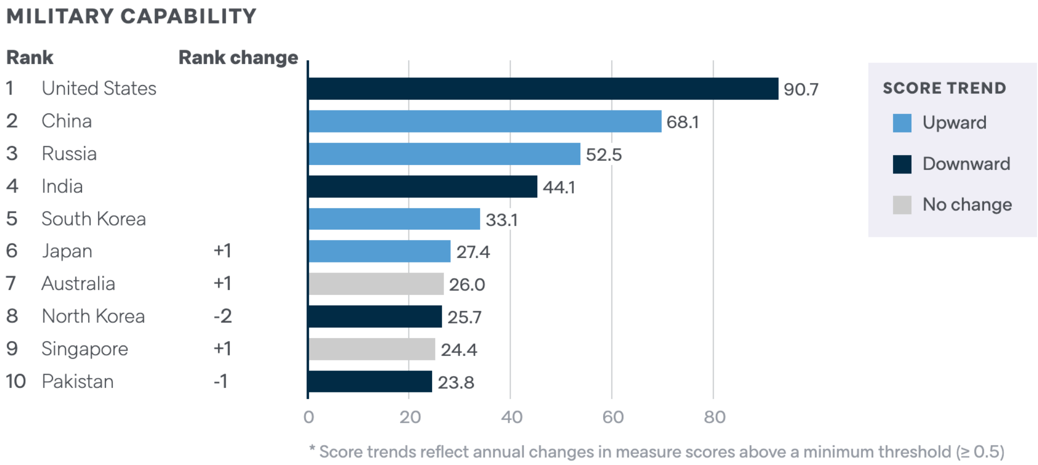
International leverage: Resources that give governments enhanced financial, legal and sanctioning powers abroad. These include global corporations and internationalised currencies, as well as sovereign wealth funds, export credit agencies and official reserves.

Technology: The technological and scientific sophistication of countries. This is measured through indicators such as labour productivity, high-tech exports, supercomputers, renewable energy generation and input variables including R&D spending.

Connectivity: The capital flows and physical means by which countries connect to and shape the global economy, including through international trade, global inward and outward investment flows, merchant fleets and international aviation hubs.

MILITARY CAPABILITY

Conventional military strength; measured in terms of defence spending, armed forces and organisation, weapons and platforms, signature capabilities and Asian military posture.



Defence spending: Annual spending on military forces and activities. This sub-measure looks at current resources devoted to maintaining, renewing, replacing and expanding military capability, measured in terms of military expenditure at market exchange rates and estimated defence-sector PPP rates.

Armed forces: Total active military and paramilitary forces, readiness and organisation. This sub-measure is principally focused on the size of armed forces, but also takes account of their combat experience, training and preparedness, as well as command and control structures.

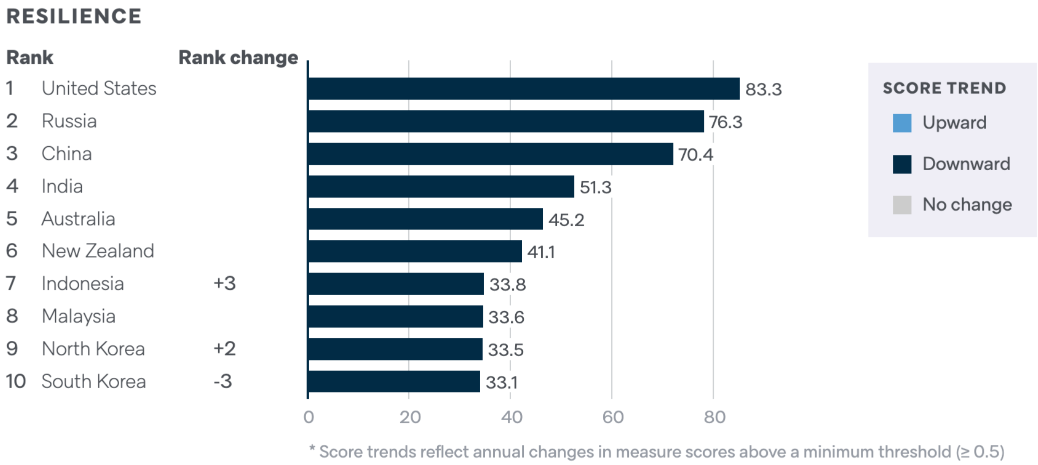
Weapons and platforms: A country's stock of land, maritime and air warfare assets and capabilities. This sub-measure consists of a number of proxy indicators for capability

Signature capabilities: Military capabilities that confer significant or asymmetric tactical and strategic advantages in warfare. These include ballistic missile capabilities, long-range maritime force projection, intelligence networks, and defensive and offensive cyber capabilities.

Asian military posture: The ability of armed forces to deploy rapidly and for a sustained period in the event of an interstate conflict in Asia. This sub-measure consists of qualitative expert-based judgements of a country's ability to engage in either a maritime or continental military confrontation in the region.

RESILIENCE

The capacity to deter real or potential external threats to state stability; measured in terms of internal institutional stability, resource security, geoeconomic security, geopolitical security and nuclear deterrence.



Internal stability: Institutional and environmental factors that enhance domestic governance and provide protection from external interference in internal affairs. This sub-measure includes indicators assessing government effectiveness, political stability, climate change resilience, the absence of internal conflict and the ability of governments to procure and administer Covid-19 vaccinations.

Resource security: Secure access to energy and other critical resources essential to the functioning of a country's economy. This sub-measure looks at dependency on energy imports, energy self-sufficiency levels, refined fuel security and the supply of rare-earth metals.

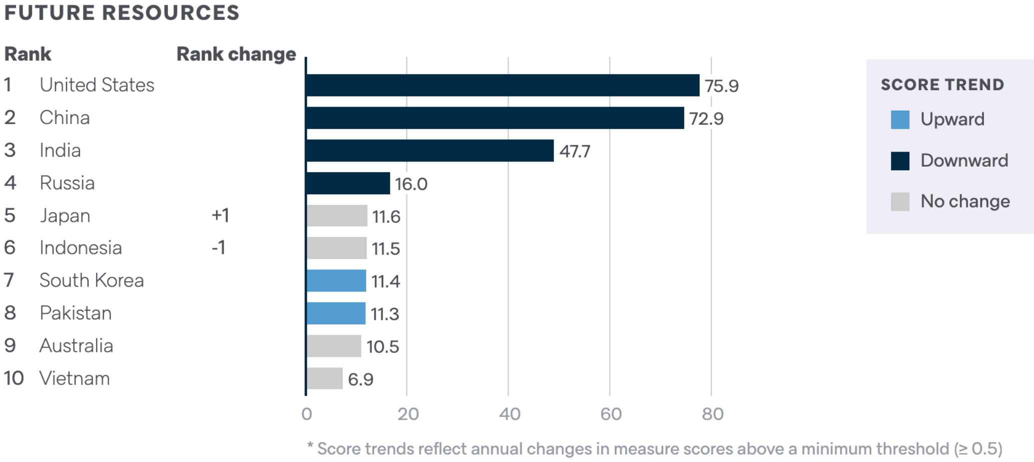
Geoeconomic security: The ability to defend against other states' economic actions on a country's geopolitical interests

Geopolitical security: Structural and political factors that minimise the risk of interstate conflict and enhance a country's territorial security. This sub-measure includes indicators such as population size relative to neighbours and geographic deterrence based on landmass, as well as active border disputes and legacies of interstate conflicts with neighbours.

Nuclear deterrence: Strategic, theatre and tactical nuclear forces that can be used to deter potential aggressors by threatening a retaliatory nuclear strike. This sub-measure assesses nuclear weapons range, ground-based nuclear missile launchers and nuclear second-strike capabilities.

FUTURE RESOURCES

The projected distribution of future resources and capabilities that play into perceptions of power today; measured in terms of estimated economic, defence and broad resources in 2030, as well as working-age population forecasts for 2050.



Economic resources 2030: Future economic size and capabilities. This is measured by forecast GDP at purchasing power parity in 2030 and the Beckley formula for estimating economic power; multiplying forecast GDP by forecast GDP per capita.

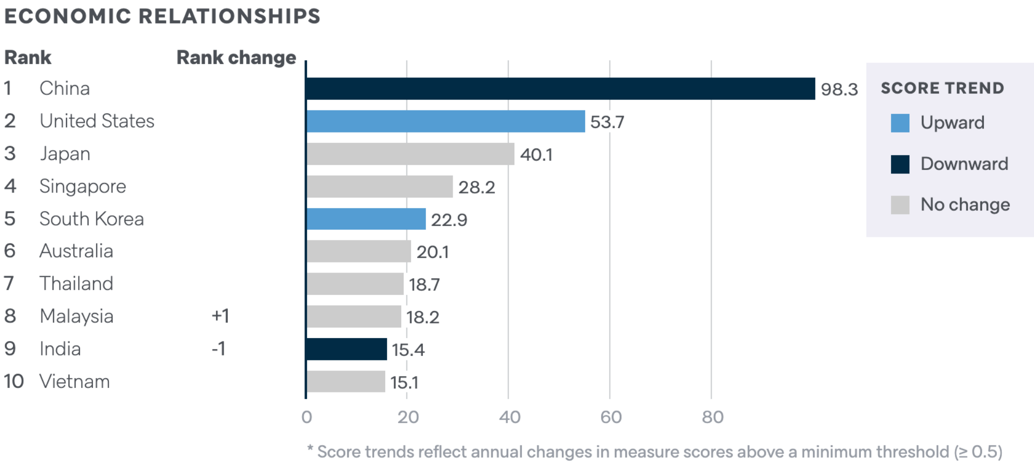
Defence resources 2030: Future defence spending and military capability enhancements. This sub-measure consists of two indicators. The first looks at forecasts of absolute levels of military expenditure in 2030, holding the current ratio of defence spending to GDP constant. The second looks at expected gains in military expenditure as a proxy for investments in military capability above replacement levels.

Broad resources 2030: Estimated score for a country's broad resources and capabilities in 2030. This sub-measure estimates broad resources in 2030, based on every Index country's current ratio of GDP and military expenditure to their aggregate score for economic capability, military capability and resilience.

Demographic resources 2050: Demographic variables that are expected to contribute to future GDP beyond 2030. This sub-measure consists of a forecast of the working-age population (15–64) in 2050 as well as the expected labour dividend from gains in the working-age population adjusted for quality of the workforce and climate change resilience.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

The capacity to exercise influence and leverage through economic interdependencies; measured in terms of trade relations, investment ties and economic diplomacy.



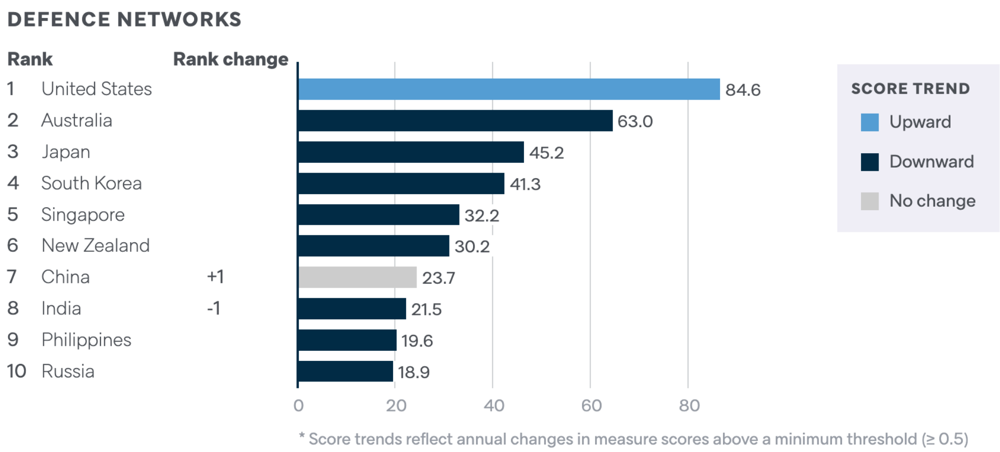
Regional trade relations: The ability to influence other countries through bilateral trade flows and relative dependencies. This sub-measure focuses on an economy's relative importance as an importer, exporter and primary trade partner for other countries, based on annual bilateral trade flows.

Regional investment ties: The ability to influence other countries through foreign direct investment flows and relative dependencies. This sub-measure focuses on an economy's relative importance as a source and destination of foreign investment for other countries, based on ten-year cumulative flows of foreign capital investment.

Economic diplomacy: The use of economic instruments to pursue collaborative interests and beneficial geopolitical outcomes. This sub-measure tracks economic diplomacy through free trade agreements and outward foreign assistance flows.

DEFENCE NETWORKS

Defence partnerships that act as force multipliers of autonomous military capability; measured through assessments of alliances, regional defence diplomacy and arms transfers.



Regional alliance network: Number, depth and combined strength of defence alliances in the region. This is measured in terms of codified security guarantees, military personnel deployed in Index countries, joint military training exercises, arms procurements from allied partners and combined operation years with allies.

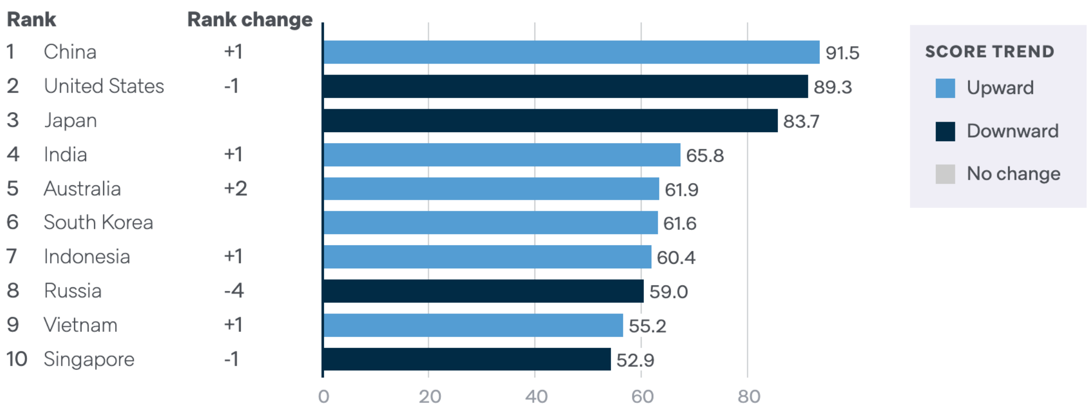
Regional defence diplomacy: Diversity and depth of defence diplomacy in the region. This sub-measure assesses defence dialogues, defence consultation pacts, foreign deployments between non-allied defence partners, joint military training exercises, combined operation years and arms procurements from non-allied countries.

Global defence partnerships: Arms trade patterns indicative of global security partnerships and collaboration across defence industries; measured in terms of annual arms trade flows and number of arms export recipients over a five-year period.

DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE

The extent and standing of a state's or territory's foreign relations; measured in terms of diplomatic networks, involvement in multilateral institutions and clubs, and overall foreign policy and strategic ambition.

DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE



* Score trends reflect annual changes in measure scores above a minimum threshold (≥ 0.5)

Diplomatic network: The regional and global reach of a country's diplomatic offices, measured in terms of total number of embassies, high commissions, permanent missions and other representative offices

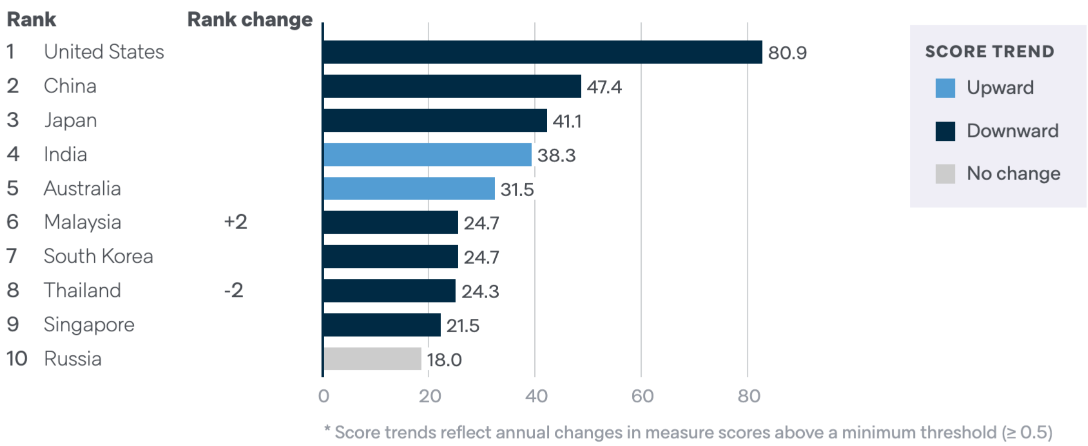
Multilateral power: A country's participation and diplomatic clout in multilateral forums. This sub-measure examines membership in select summits, diplomatic clubs and intergovernmental organisations, as well as financial contributions to the United Nations and development banks, and voting alignment with other countries in UN resolutions.

Foreign policy: The ability of government leaders and foreign policy bureaucracies to advance their country's diplomatic interests. This sub-measure aggregates qualitative expert-based judgements of how effectively leaders pursue their country's diplomatic interests, their demonstrated level of strategic ambition and the wider efficacy of a country's foreign policy bureaucracy. The sub-measure includes temporary indicators measuring vaccine donations to the region.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The ability to shape international public opinion through cultural appeal and interaction; measured in terms of cultural projection, information flows and people exchanges.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE



Cultural projection: Cultural influences and exports that help to enhance a country's reputation abroad. This sub-measure looks at online search trends in the region, exports of cultural services, global brands, and the international status of a country's passports, cities and heritage sites.

Information flows: The regional appeal of a country's media outlets and universities. This sub-measure looks at the online search trends in the region for selected national news agencies, newspapers, television and radio broadcasters, as well as the number of inbound international students from the region enrolled in tertiary education.

People exchanges: The depth and influence of a country's people-to-people links in the region. This sub-measure tracks the size of regional diasporas, and the attractiveness of countries as travel and emigration destinations.

2023 Power Gap

The Asia Power Index consists of four resource measures, which look at what countries have, and four influence measures, which look at what countries do with what they have.

The Power Gap provides a secondary analysis to the Index based on the interplay between resources and influence. Countries can be overperformers or underperformers, irrespective of where they place in the rankings.

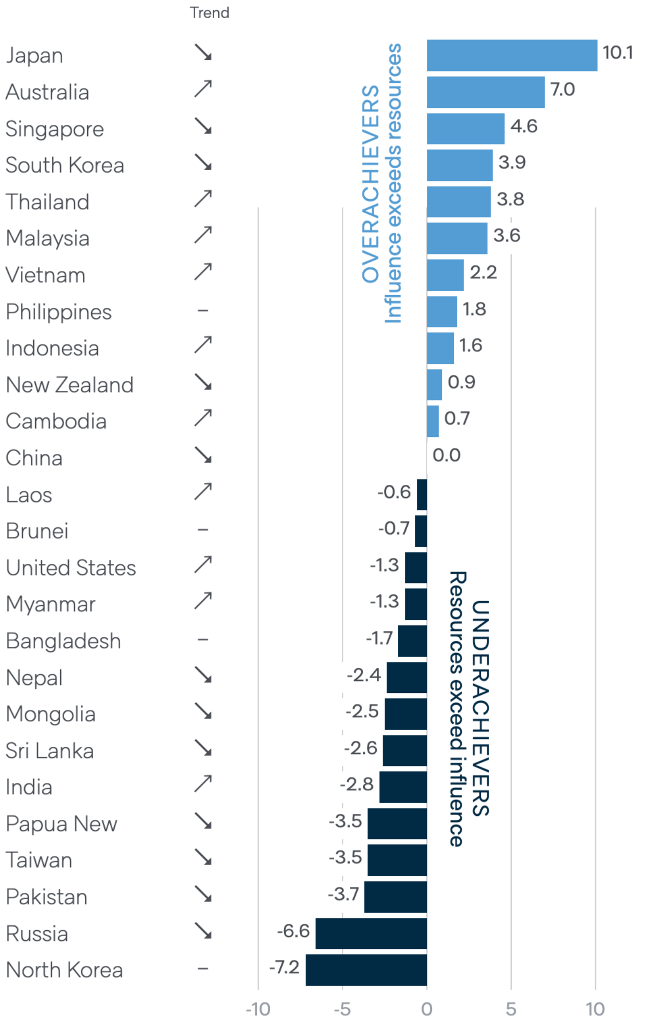
Countries with outsized influence in Asia relative to their resources have a positive Power Gap. Conversely, countries that exert undersized influence relative to their resources register a negative Power Gap.

The distance from the trend line — which is determined using a linear regression — reveals how well each country converts its resources into influence in Asia.

Japan's Power Gap score of 10.1 reveals it to be a quintessential "smart power", making efficient use of limited resources to wield broad-based diplomatic, economic and cultural influence in the region. By contrast, North Korea — a misfit middle power — derives its power principally from its military resources and nuclear weapons capability. The country's diplomatic and economic isolation, however, limits its regional influence resulting in a Power Gap score of -7.3.

Australia, Singapore and South Korea have more influence than their raw capabilities would indicate. They are highly networked and externally focused. Positive Power Gap scores among top-performing middle powers point to their ability and willingness to work collaboratively with other countries to pursue collective interests.

Developing countries often register influence shortfalls — reflecting their unrealised power potential and internal constraints on their ability to project power abroad. Meanwhile, Taiwan's negative Power Gap reflects its inconsistent performance across the influence measures due to a lack of formal diplomatic recognition and the territory's exclusion from key multilateral forums and initiatives. Russia's Power Gap score of -6.6 indicates its regional influence is limited by its position on the geographic periphery of Asia.



A country's Power Gap score is the difference between its overall power and what its power would be expected to be given its available resources.

Methodology

The Lowy Institute Asia Power Index consists of eight measures of power, 30 thematic sub-measures and 133 indicators. More than half of these indicators involve original Lowy Institute research, while the rest are drawn from hundreds of publicly available national and international sources.

The 2023 edition of the Index has expanded to include three new indicators that track the diplomatic engagements between the Index nations: multilateral diplomatic meetings, bilateral diplomatic meetings, and convening power (diplomatic meetings hosted by the Index country). Collectively, these indicators capture all diplomatic activity among Index countries' leaders and foreign ministers.

The selection of indicators was driven by an extensive literature review and expert consultations designed to address these methodological hurdles. As such, each indicator represents a carefully selected proxy for a broader category of variables often more difficult, if not impossible, to measure comparatively.

The methodological framework of the Index is informed by the OECD Handbook on Constructing Composite Indicators. A distance-to-frontier approach is used to compare a country's results with the best performing and worst performing countries in each dataset.

The distance-to-frontier method allows for different indicators to be made comparable across a diverse set of metrics, while preserving the relative distance among the original data values. The method also reflects the notion that power in international relations is relative, measured as a comparative advantage in a given frame of reference.

Weightings

The Lowy Institute has assigned a set of weightings to the component parts of the Asia Power Index that reflect their relative importance for exercising state power.

These authoritative weightings reflect the collective judgement of Lowy Institute experts based on relevant academic literature and consultations with policymakers from the region. They take into account the dimensions of power considered most advantageous to countries given the current geopolitical landscape of the region.

Measure	**Weighting**
Economic Capability	17.5%
Military Capability	17.5%
Resilience	10%
Future Resources	10%
Economic Relationships	15%
Defence Networks	10%
Diplomatic Influence	10%
Cultural Influence	10%

While our weightings are consistent with broadly held views in policy and scholarly communities, it is of course possible to reach other value judgements about the relative importance of the measures.

An innovative calculator on the Index's digital platform enables users to adjust the principal weightings according to their own assumptions and reorder the rankings on that basis.

Sensitivity analysis has determined that the large number of indicators included in the Index, and variations across countries within those indicators, are quantitatively more important than our weighting scheme. The data points play the primary role in determining the rankings of the Lowy Institute Asia Power Index.

Review: Three stages

The Index model underwent three stages of review after development. First, the analytical assumptions and findings were submitted through an extensive peer review process. Second, a team of fact checkers verified that the raw data points and their normalised scores were factually correct and drew on the latest available data. Third, PwC provided a limited integrity review of the spreadsheets and formulas used to calculate the eight measures of the Index.

Indicators and Sources

ECONOMIC CAPABILITY

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Size **40%**	GDP	Estimated GDP at purchasing power parity, current prices (2022); IMF
International leverage **20%**	Corporate giants	Number of public companies listed in the Forbes 2000 (2022); Forbes 2000
	Global reserve currency	Currency composition of official foreign exchange reserves, annualised average (2021); IMF
	International currency share	Share of international financial transactions undertaken in national currency, annualised average (2021); Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT)
	Official reserves	Official reserve assets including gold, current dollars (2021); World Bank; Reuters; Central Bank of Taiwan;
	Export credit agencies	Export credit agencies, total assets, current dollars (2021); Lowy Institute
	Sovereign wealth funds	Sovereign wealth funds, total assets, current dollars (2021); Lowy Institute; Sovereign Wealth Fund Institute
Technology **20%**	High-tech exports	Estimated technological sophistication of exports EXPY, 0–100 (2020); World Bank World Integrated Trade Solutions (WITS) database; Lowy Institute
	Productivity	GDP output per worker, constant 2010 dollars (2021); International Labour Organization
	Human resources in R&D	Total R&D researchers, full-time equivalent (latest year available); UNESCO; Taiwan Statistical Data Book; Lowy Institute; OECD
	R&D spending (% of GDP)	Gross domestic expenditure on R&D as a share of GDP (latest year available); UNESCO; Taiwan Statistical Data Book; Lowy Institute; OECD
	Nobel prizes (sciences)	High achievements in physics, chemistry, and physiology or medicine (1990–2021); NobelPrize.org
	Supercomputers	Number of supercomputers in the global top 500 (2022); Top 500.org
	Satellites launched	Satellites launched by country of ownership or operation (2018-21); Union of Concerned Scientists Satellite Database
	Renewable energy	Annual electricity generation from renewables, gigawatt hours (2020); International Energy Agency; Lowy Institute
Connectivity **20%**	Global exports	Exports of goods and services, current dollars (2020); World Bank; UN Comtrade; Observatory of Economic Complexity
	Global imports	Imports of goods and services, current dollars (2020); World Bank; UN Comtrade; Observatory of Economic Complexity
	Global investment outflows	Three-year cumulative flows of outward foreign capital investment (2019-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
	Global investment inflows	Three-year cumulative flows of inward foreign capital investment (2019-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
	Merchant fleet	Total fleet, dead-weight tons (2022); UN Conference on Trade and Development
	Travel hubs	Direct international routes from principal airport hub (July, 2022); Lowy Institute; Flights From.com

MILITARY CAPABILITY

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Defence spending **20%**	Military expenditure, market exchange rates	Estimated military expenditure, current dollars (2022); Lowy Institute; US Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance
	Military expenditure, defence sector PPP	Estimated military expenditure at defence sector purchasing power parity, current prices (2022); Lowy Institute; US Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance
Armed forces **20%**	Military and paramilitary forces	Active military and paramilitary personnel (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Training, readiness and sustainment	Expert survey: Training and preparedness for sustained operations in the event of interstate conflict, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2020-21); Lowy Institute
	Organisation: Combat experience	Expert survey: Combat experience relevant to the ability of armed forces to engage in interstate conflict, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Organisation: Command and control	Expert survey: Exercise of authority and direction over armed forces in the event of an interstate conflict, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
Weapons and platforms **25%**	Land warfare: Manoeuvre	Proxy: Main battle tanks and infantry fighting vehicles (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Land warfare: Firepower	Proxy: Attack helicopters, used in close air support for ground troops (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Maritime warfare: Sea control	Proxy: Principal surface combatants — frigates, destroyers, cruisers and carriers (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Maritime warfare: Firepower	Proxy: Missile vertical launching cells on board surface combatants and submarines (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Maritime warfare: Sea denial	Proxy: Tactical submarines (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Air warfare: Fighters	Fighter/ground attack aircraft (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Air warfare: Enablers	Proxy: Transport aircraft, airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Technology, maintenance and range	Expert survey: Technology, maintenance and range of weapons systems, equipment and materiel, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
Signature capabilities **25%**	Ground-based missile launchers	Launching platforms for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM), medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBM), short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM), and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Ballistic missile submarines	Ballistic missile submarines (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Long-range maritime force projection	Proxy: Carriers and principal amphibious ships (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Area denial capabilities	Expert survey: Air defence, anti-naval, and intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting capabilities, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Intelligence capabilities	Expert survey: Institutional know-how, overseas reach, personnel and technological sophistication of intelligence agencies, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Cyber capabilities	Expert survey: Defensive and offensive cyber capabilities, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
Asian military posture **10%**	Ground forces deployment	Expert survey: Ability of ground forces to deploy with speed and for a sustained period in the event of a major continental military confrontation in the Asia-Pacific region, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Naval deployment	Expert survey: Ability of the navy to deploy with speed and for a sustained period in the event of a major maritime military confrontation in the Asia-Pacific region, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute

RESILIENCE

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Internal stability **17.5%**	Government effectiveness	Government effectiveness: Worldwide Governance Indicators; percentile rank, 0–100 (2020); Worldwide Governance Indicators
	Political stability	Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism: Worldwide Governance Indicators; percentile rank, 0–100 (2020); Worldwide Governance Indicators
	Climate change resilience	Resilience to threats relating to food risk, water risk, temperature anomalies and natural disasters; global rankings (2021); Ecological Threat Register
	Internal conflict years	Number of years since 1946 in which at least one internal armed conflict resulted in 25 or more battle-related deaths (1946–2020); Uppsala Conflict Data Program
	High-intensity internal conflict years	Number of years since 1946 in which at least one internal armed conflict resulted in 1,000 or more battle-related deaths (1946–2020); Uppsala Conflict Data Program
	Infant mortality	Number of infants dying before reaching one year of age, per thousand live births (2020); World Bank; CIA World Factbook
	COVID-19 vaccinations	Doses of Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines administered per hundred people (most recently available data as of 01/06/2022); Our World in Data
Resource security **17.5%**	Energy trade balance	Net energy exports in million tonnes of oil equivalent, Mtoe (2020); International Energy Agency; Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre
	Energy self-sufficiency	Primary energy production as a share of total primary energy use (2020); International Energy Agency; Asia Pacific Energy Research Centre
	Fuel trade balance	Net exports of refined petroleum, current dollars (2020); Observatory of Economic Complexity
	Fuel security	Deficit of refined petroleum as a proportion of GDP (2020); Lowy Institute; Observatory of Economic Complexity; World Bank; IMF
	Rare-earth metals supply	Mining production of rare-earth metals, tonnes (2021); US Geological Survey
Geoeconomic security **17.5%**	Diversity of export products	Total products exported to at least one foreign market with a value of at least US$10,000 (2020); World Bank World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) database
	Diversity of export markets	Foreign markets to which exporter ships at least one product with a value of at least US$10,000 (2020); World Bank World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) database
	Dependency on global trade	Trade measured as a proportion of GDP (2020); World Bank; UN Comtrade; Bank of Korea; IMF; Observatory of Economic Complexity; Lowy Institute
	Dependency on primary trade partner	Two-way trade with primary trade partner as a share of total trade (2020); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics
Geopolitical security **17.5%**	Population relative to neighbours	Population as a share of neighbouring country populations: weighted at 100% for neighbouring countries with land borders; 75% for neighbouring countries divided by a strait; 25% for neighbouring countries with touching or overlapping claimed EEZ boundaries (2020); Lowy Institute, World Bank
	Landmass deterrent	Country landmass, square kilometres (2020); World Bank; Taiwan Statistical Data Book
	Demographic deterrent	Total population (2020); World Bank; Taiwan Statistical Data Book
	Interstate conflict legacies	Years of interstate conflict with neighbouring Index countries as a primary party (1948–2020); Uppsala Conflict Data Program; Lowy Institute
	Boundary disputes	Overlapping territorial claims and/or unresolved land border and maritime demarcations (2021); Lowy Institute
Nuclear deterrence **30%**	Nuclear weapons capability	States with nuclear weapons (2022); Lowy Institute
	Nuclear weapons range	Maximum estimated nuclear missile range, kilometres (2022); CSIS Missile Defense Project; Lowy Institute
	Ground-based nuclear missile launchers	Launching platforms for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBM), medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBM), short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM), and ground-launched cruise missiles (GLCM) containing nuclear warheads (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022
	Nuclear second-strike capability	Proxy: Ballistic missile submarines (2022); IISS Military Balance 2022

FUTURE RESOURCES

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Economic resources 2030 **25%**	GDP baseline	Estimated GDP at purchasing power parity, current prices (2022); Lowy Institute; IMF
	GDP forecast 2030	GDP forecast at purchasing power parity, constant 2022 prices (2030); Lowy Institute
	Economic capability 2030	Beckley formula: GDP by GDP per capita forecast at purchasing power parity, 0–100 (2030); Lowy Institute
Defence resources 2030 **25%**	Military expenditure baseline	Estimated military expenditure at defence sector purchasing power parity, current prices (2022); Lowy Institute; US Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance
	Military expenditure forecast 2030	Estimated military expenditure forecast at defence sector purchasing power parity, constant 2022 prices (2030); Lowy Institute
	Military capability enhancement 2022-30	Forecast absolute increase in military expenditure above existing levels at estimated defence sector purchasing power parity, constant 2022 prices (2023–30); Lowy Institute
Broad resources 2030 **30%**	Estimated broad resources 2030	Estimated aggregate score for economic resources, military capability and resilience measures based on GDP and military expenditure trends, 0–100 (2030); Lowy Institute
Demographic resources 2050 **20%**	Working-age population baseline	Total working-age population, 15–64 (2022); UN Population Division; Lowy Institute
	Working-age population forecast 2050	Medium variant forecast for total working-age population, 15–64 (2050); UN Population Division; Lowy Institute
	Labour dividend 2020-50	Forecast gains in working-age population, adjusted for quality of the workforce and climate change resilience (2022-50); quality is proxied by GDP per worker in 2019 at purchasing power parity; Lowy Institute

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Regional trade relations **35%**	Trade with region	Total value of trade with Index countries, current dollars (2020); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics; Lowy Institute
	Primary trade partner	Number of Index countries in which state is the primary regional trading partner (2020); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics; Lowy Institute
	Regional selling power	Average imports share in 25 Index countries (2020); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics; Lowy Institute
	Regional buying power	Average exports share in 25 Index countries (2020); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics; Lowy Institute
Regional investment ties **35%**	Foreign investment in region	Ten-year cumulative flows of outward foreign capital investment in Index countries (2012-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
	Primary foreign investor	Index countries in which state is the primary regional inward foreign direct investor, based on ten-year cumulative flows of foreign capital investment (2012-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
	Average share of foreign investment	Average share of inward foreign direct investment in 25 Index countries, based on ten-year cumulative flows of foreign capital investment (2012-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
	Investment attractiveness	Ten-year cumulative flows of inward foreign capital investment (2012-21); FDI Markets; Lowy Institute
Economic diplomacy **30%**	Global FTAs	Bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements concluded by Index countries with other countries (2022); World Trade Organization; Lowy Institute
	Regional FTAs	Bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements concluded with Index countries (2022); World Trade Organization; Lowy Institute
	Foreign assistance (global)	Annual overseas development assistance (ODA) and other official flows (OOF), current dollars (2020); OECD; AidData
	Foreign assistance (regional)	Annual overseas development assistance (ODA) and other official flows (OOF) to Asia, current dollars (2020); OECD; AidData

DEFENCE NETWORKS

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Regional alliance network **40%**	Regional military alliances	Number of codified alliances between Index countries, including a mutual defence clause or actionable security guarantee (2022); Lowy Institute; Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions Project
	Allied foreign forces	Allied military personnel deployed in Index countries: minimum of 50 personnel deployed on a permanent or semi-permanent rotational basis (2022); Lowy Institute; IISS Military Balance 2022
	Joint training (allies)	Number of joint training exercises conducted with allied Index countries (2017-21); Lowy Institute
	Combined operation years (allies)	Cumulative years fought alongside allied Index countries in individual conflicts, as a primary or supporting party (1948–2020); Uppsala Conflict Data Program
	Arms procurements (allies)	Arms imports from allied Index countries expressed in SIPRI Trend Indicator Values (2013-21); SIPRI Arms Transfer Database
	Alliance force multiplier	Ratio of combined allied military capabilities to autonomous military capability (2022); Lowy Institute
Regional defence diplomacy **40%**	Defence Dialogues	Number of bilateral and plurilateral defence diplomacy meetings held between Index countries (2021); Lowy Institute
	Defence consultation pacts	Defence consultation pacts between non-allied Index countries (2022); Lowy Institute
	Foreign forces and deployments	Military personnel deployed to and from non-allied Index countries: minimum of 50 personnel deployed on a permanent or semi-permanent rotational basis (2022); Lowy Institute; IISS Military Balance 2022
	Joint training (non-allies)	Number of joint training exercises conducted with non-allied Index countries (2017-21); Lowy Institute
	Combined operation years (non-allies)	Cumulative years fought alongside non-allied Index countries in individual conflicts, as a primary or supporting party (1948–2020); Uppsala Conflict Data Program
	Arms procurements (non-allies)	Arms imports from non-allied Index countries expressed in SIPRI trend indicator values (2013-21); SIPRI Arms Transfers Database
Global defence partnerships **20%**	Global arms trade	Annual arms imports and exports, current dollars (2019); US Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance
	Arms export partnerships	Number of arms export recipients, including state and non-state groups (2016-21); SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Diplomatic network **33%**	Embassies (regional)	Number of embassies, high commissions and permanent missions in Index countries (2021); Lowy Institute Global Diplomacy Index
	Embassies (global)	Number of embassies, high commissions and permanent missions globally (2021); Lowy Institute Global Diplomacy Index
	Second-tier diplomatic network (regional)	Consulates and other representative offices in Index countries (2021); Lowy Institute Global Diplomacy Index
Multilateral power **33%**	Summits, clubs and organisations	Membership in select summits, diplomatic clubs and regional intergovernmental organisations (2021); Lowy Institute
	Institutional voting shares	Average voting shares by subscribed capital in major multilateral development banks (2020); Lowy Institute
	UN capital contributions	Net capital contributions to the United Nations Secretariat, share of global total (2021); UN Official Document System
	Voting alignment	Voting alignment with other Index countries in adopted United Nations General Assembly resolutions (2020); UN Digital Library
	Voting partners	Times country featured among top three voting partners for other Index countries in United Nations General Assembly (2020); UN Digital Library
	Diplomatic Dialogues (Multilateral)	Number of plurilateral and multilateral diplomatic dialogues held between Index countries (2021). At leader or Foreign Minister level; Lowy Institute
Foreign policy **33%**	Political leadership (regional)	Expert survey: Efficacy of political leaders in advancing their country's diplomatic interests in Asia, 0–100 (2021); Lowy Institute
	Political leadership (global)	Expert survey: Efficacy of political leaders in advancing their country's diplomatic interests globally, 0–100 (2021); Lowy Institute
	Strategic ambition	Expert survey: Extent to which political leaders demonstrate strategic ambition, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Diplomatic service	Expert survey: Efficacy of country's diplomatic service and wider foreign policy bureaucracy, two-year rolling average, 0–100 (2021-22); Lowy Institute
	Diplomatic Dialogues (Bilateral)	Number of bilateral diplomatic dialogues held between Index countries (2021) at leader or foreign minister level; Lowy Institute
	Diplomatic Dialogues (Convening Power)	Number of visits to Index country by leaders and foreign ministers of other Index countries (2021); Lowy Institute
	Vaccine donations	Doses of Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines donated and delivered to the region (June 2022); Think Global Health, Council of Foreign Relations; Lowy Institute; World Bank
	Vaccine donations (per capita)	Doses of Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccines donated and delivered to the region per capita of the donor country (June 2022); Think Global Health, Council of Foreign Relations; Lowy Institute; World Bank

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

Sub-measure	Indicators	Technical description
Cultural projection **40%**	Online search interest	Online interest for a given Index country in 25 other Index countries; average percent of total Google and Baidu searches for selected countries (2021); Lowy Institute; Google trends; Baidu
	Cultural exports	Exports of cultural services, current dollars (2020); UN Conference on Trade and Development; UNESCO
	Global brands	Number of brands in the Global 500 (2022); Brand Directory
	Prestige: Skyscrapers	Buildings in financial capital above 150 metres in height (2022); Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat
	Status: Visa-free travel	Number of countries that citizens can travel to visa-free (2022); Henley & Partners
	Cultural heritage	UNESCO World Heritage listed sites (2021); UNESCO
Information flows **30%**	Asia-Pacific international students	Pre-pandemic international students enrolled in tertiary education from East, South, West and Central Asia and the Pacific (2019); UNESCO; ICEF Monitor; Institute of International Education; Lowy Institute
	Regional influence: News agencies	Online interest for a given Index country's news agency in 25 other Index countries; average percent of total online searches for selected news agencies (2021); Lowy Institute; Google Trends
	Regional influence: Newspapers	Online interest for a given Index country's national newspaper in 25 other Index countries; average percent of total online searches for selected newspapers (2021); Lowy Institute; Google Trends
	Regional influence: TV broadcasters	Online interest for a given Index country's international television broadcaster(s) in 25 other Index countries; average percent of total online searches for selected television broadcasters (2021); Lowy Institute; Google Trends
	Regional influence: Radio broadcasters	Online interest for a given Index country's public radio broadcaster(s) in 25 other Index countries; average percent of total online searches for selected radio broadcasters (2021); Lowy Institute; Google Trends
People exchanges **30%**	Diaspora influence	Average share of total immigrant populations resident in 25 Index countries from the given Index country of origin (2020); Lowy Institute; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Taiwan Overseas Community Affairs Council
	Migrant drawing power	Average share of global migrant populations from 25 Index countries of origin settled in the given Index country (2020); Lowy Institute; UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs;
	Regional travel destination	Arrivals of non-resident visitors from Index countries at national borders (2020); UN World Tourism Organization; Reuters
	Regional travel connectivity	Direct international flight routes from principal airport hubs of Index countries (June, 2022); Lowy Institute; Flights From.com

LOWY INSTITUTE

power.lowyinstitute.org