

International Business Environment and Political Risk WiSe 2021-22

Period: January 14 - January 22, 2022

Instructor Dr. Paul SANDERS,
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Business School, France

Language: English

ECTS: 6

Course hours: 24

Course type: Elective

1. Course Presentation

When she became president of the EU Commission in 2019, Ursula von der Leyen spoke of hers as a 'geopolitical Commission committed to sustainable policies'. After having reached Moscow, Washington DC, and Beijing, that day the geopolitical train, it seems, also reached Brussels. What are the implications for business? The parameters of the new business environment, now set in stone by the turn in official EU policy, no longer allow companies the privilege of outsourcing the geopolitical factor to governments (as they have done in the past). It indicates a paradigm shift in the business-government nexus, which has been in gestation for some time, but then accelerated after 2008. It compels businesses to integrate the new geopolitical factor into their strategy frameworks and develop their own response and strike capacity. The reconfiguration did not come out of the blue, as there is a historical prototype for what is happening today. However, these precedents no longer figure in the memory of the younger generation and must therefore be reactivated.

Following an extensive canvassing of geopolitical risk and government-business relations in the international environment, the course introduces the principal quantitative and qualitative methodologies; it integrates specific country and industry foci; it outlines the political risk management industry and its key players (such as Eurasia Group, Maplecroft, Kroll, or Control Risks); and it concludes with a coda on new horizons.

2. Learning objectives

- To solicit frameworks and concepts that allow an adequate framing of recent changes in the international business environment
- To familiarize students with economic statecraft and the twin concepts of trade and economic warfare

- To demonstrate how these changes pose potential threats to companies and impact the way they operate
- To understand the role of geopolitical expertise within company strategy
- To examine what companies can do in terms of introducing counter-measures and hedging against these new sources of risk, with a particular emphasis on political, cyber and information risk
- To understand the emerging industry landscape of risk management,
- To understand the business opportunities and new professional roles this entails
- To familiarize b-school students with the need for an extension of the notion of business strategy, and geopolitical thinking as a strategic tool

Keywords: international business environment, economic statecraft, geopolitics & business, strategy, risks, cyber security

3. Assessment method

Nature	Type	% of final mark	% of individual mark
Individual assessment	Homework	50 %	100 %
Group assessment	Group presentation or dossier	50 %	0 %

4. Structure of course

Session	Form	Duration	Themes	Suggested course dates
01	Seminar	4 academic hours	Introduction to international business environment, geopolitical risk and strategic management The business-politics nexus, economic statecraft, trade and economic warfare	Friday: 14.01.2022 10.00 – 13.00 h W113
02	Seminar	4 academic hours	Geopolitical risk: hedges, counter-measures, management methodologies	Saturday: 15.01.2022 10.00 – 13.00 h W113
03	Seminar	2 academic hours	The political risk management industry	Monday: 17.01.2022 18.00 - 19.30 h W116
04	Seminar	2 academic hours	The political risk management industry (continued)	Tuesday: 18.01.2022 20.00 - 21.30 h W113
05	Seminar	2 academic hours	Country risk workshop	Wednesday: 19.01.2022 20.00 – 21.30 h W113
06	Seminar	2 academic hours	Country risk workshop (continued)	Thursday 20.01.2022 20.00 – 21.30 h W113
07	Seminar	4 academic hours	Regional focus: political risk in Russia, CIS; industry focus: energy market	Friday: 21.01.2022 10.00 – 13.00 h W113
08	Seminar	4 academic hours	New horizons: cyber-risk and cyber-security	Saturday. 22.01.2022 10.00 – 13.00 h W113

5. Bibliography

John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, eds., *In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age*, Rand Corporation, 1997.

Éric Bosserelle, « La guerre économique, forme moderne de la guerre ? », *Revue Française de Socio-économie* 2011/2 (n° 8) : 167-186.

Patrick Chun, John Coleman, and Nabil El-Hage, HBR Case Study: Setting Up Shop in a Political Hot Spot, *Harvard Business Review*, October 2010, <https://hbr.org/2010/10/hbr-case-study-setting-up-shop-in-a-political-hot-spot>

Klaus J. Dodds, *Global Geopolitics: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge, 2014.

Thomas GOMART, *Guerres invisibles. Nos prochains défis géopolitiques*, Paris : Éditions Tallandier, 2021.

Witold J. Henisz and Bennet A. Zelner, *The Hidden Risks in Emerging Markets*, Harvard Business Review, April 2010, <https://hbr.org/2010/04/the-hidden-risks-in-emerging-markets>

John Mikler, *The Political Power of Global Corporations*. Polity Press, 2018.

Joseph Mark S. Munoz, ed., *Handbook on the Geopolitics of Business*, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

Nils O. Oermann, Hans-Jürgen Wolff, *Wirtschaftskriege. Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Herder, 2019.

Condoleezza Rice, Amy B. Zegart, *Political Risk: How Businesses and Organizations Can Anticipate Global Insecurity*, Twelve, 2018.

Registration Period: 01.09.2021 to 18.10.2021

(Mails sent before 1. September will not be considered)

Please register by sending an email to: suzanne.weinberger@ur.de

- Surname, first name
- Student number
- Home university
- Bachelor or Master (semester)
- permanent email address

Number of participants: **20 (first come first serve)**