International Business Environment and Political Risk  
WiSe 2021-22

Period: January 14 - January 22, 2022

Instructor  
Dr. Paul SANDERS,  
Associate Professor, Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship, NEOMA 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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>% of final mark</th>
<th>% of individual mark</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual assessment</td>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>50 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group assessment</td>
<td>Group presentation or dossier</td>
<td>50 %</td>
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### 4. Structure of course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Suggested course dates</th>
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</table>
| 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


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)**