SYLLABUS

GO401E_0108_26

Geopolitics in the Face of Environmental, Social and Digital Transformations

ACADEMIC AREA :	**FINANCE AND GEOPOLITICS**
PROGRAMME :	**PGE**
PERIOD :	**FALL**
COORDINATOR :	**Ms. Olena MYKAL**
INSTRUCTOR(S) :	**Mr. Jean-Baptiste LE MOULEC** **Mr. Jean-Charles GALLI**
CONTACT HOURS :	**Mr. Minh Cuong LE QUAN** **Ms. Olena MYKAL**
STUDY TIME :	**15.0 hours**
CREDITS :	**null hours (Class preparation, homework and assessments)**
	2.0 ECTS
AOL :	**YES**

PRE-REQUISITE MODULES :

No prior expertise in geopolitics is required; students are expected to mobilize general business, economics, and management knowledge acquired in previous courses.

MODULE DESCRIPTION :

This intermediate graduate module explores how environmental, social, and digital transformations reshape geopolitical environments and influence organizations, industries, and international business.

Rather than focusing on the prediction of international events, the module approaches geopolitics as a way of understanding interdependence, vulnerabilities, power relations, and strategic uncertainty in a rapidly changing world.

Students analyze how geopolitical developments affect supply chains, technologies, markets, regulations, stakeholders, and business decisions. The module provides practical analytical tools that can be applied across industries and professional contexts.

By the end of the course, students will be able to make sense of complex geopolitical-business situations, structure uncertainty, identify risks and opportunities, and formulate evidence-based recommendations for decision-makers.

The module follows a practical analytical framework:
Transformations Stakeholders Dependencies Risks Strategic Responses

Students use the same company case throughout the module, progressively building a complete geopolitical-business analysis from transformations and dependencies to risks and strategic responses. Through group work and individual analytical exercises, they apply the framework to understand how organizations are exposed to geopolitical challenges and how they can respond strategically.

Unlike Geoeconomy, which focuses primarily on international economic mechanisms and competition, this module examines how broader geopolitical transformations shape the environments in which organizations operate.

The module develops strategic thinking, analytical reasoning, and practical decision-making capabilities that can be applied across international business and organizational environments.

CONTRIBUTION TO PROGRAMME LEARNING OBJECTIVES :

- Change mindsets to enhance organizational resilience in polycrisis environments #ChangeMindsets

MODULE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILOs) :

ILO1 Analyze how environmental, social, and digital transformations reshape geopolitical environments and organizational contexts.
ILO2 Apply analytical frameworks and tools to identify stakeholders, dependencies, organizational exposure, and geopolitical-business risks.
ILO3 Evaluate and prioritize geopolitical-business risks under conditions of uncertainty.
ILO4 Develop evidence-based strategic recommendations grounded in geopolitical-business analysis.

TOPICS COVERED :

- Geopolitics and business environments
- Environmental, social, and digital transformations
- Stakeholder analysis
- Strategic dependencies and organizational exposure
- Geopolitical-business risk evaluation
- Strategic response analysis
- Organizational adaptation under uncertainty
- Decision-making in complex international environments

RESEARCH-LED TEACHING :

The module integrates research-informed teaching through the use of academic literature, policy reports, strategic analyses, and business cases addressing contemporary geopolitical transformations and organizational challenges.
Research is mobilized as a resource for professional judgment and strategic reasoning rather than as theoretical content alone.
Students engage with evidence-based frameworks and applied analytical approaches drawn from academic research, international organizations, think tanks, and business practice to support the analysis of uncertainty, interdependencies, risks, and strategic adaptation.

CSR AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS :

The module contributes to the understanding of sustainability-related geopolitical challenges affecting organizations and international business environments.

CSR NB HOURS :

5

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS COVERED :

- 08 - Decent work and economic growth
- 09 - Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- 12 - Responsible consumption and production
- 13 - Climate action
- 16 - Peace, justice and strong institutions

TEACHING METHODS :

Teaching methods are aligned with Rennes School of Business competency-based and experiential learning approach. The module combines short conceptual inputs with applied analytical activities designed to develop students' ability to analyze geopolitical-business challenges and formulate strategic responses.
Teaching methods include:

- interactive lectures and guided discussions,
- case-based learning,
- analytical workshops,
- collaborative problem-solving,
- group company analysis,
- business-oriented geopolitical analysis,
- and reflective debriefing activities.

Students progressively apply a structured analytical toolkit consisting of:

- PESTEL analysis,
- Stakeholder Mapping,
- Dependency Mapping,
- Risk Matrix,
- Strategic Response Framework

The same company cases are used throughout the module to allow cumulative learning and progressive application of analytical tools. The module emphasizes practical application, structured analytical reasoning, and professional relevance rather than theoretical memorization.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT :

Continuous/Final	Group/Individual	Assessment	Weight	Duration	ILOs assessed
Continuous	Group	Written Assessment in class	20%		1 and 2
Continuous	Individual	Written Assessment in class	20%		3 and 4
Final	Individual	Final written exam	60%	2 Heures	All

Assessment 1 details:

Group analytical report. Students analyze a selected company using PESTEL Analysis, Stakeholder Mapping, and Dependency Mapping and identify sources of organizational exposure to geopolitical-business challenges.

Assessment 2 details:

Individual in-class written analytical exercise. Students evaluate geopolitical-business risks and formulate strategic responses for a new company case provided by the instructor using the Risk Matrix and Strategic Response Framework.

Assessment 3 details:

Students apply the complete analytical methodology developed during the course to a new geopolitical-business case and formulate evidence-based recommendations under conditions of uncertainty.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY :

Academic integrity at Rennes SB is about sharing a set of values and practices promoting intellectual honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in all aspects of learning, studying and researching. Upholding academic integrity is key to maintaining the reputation of the student and the ultimate value of Rennes SB Degrees. Students are expected to demonstrate these values when submitting assessed work.

Academic misconduct is defined as gaining or attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage for yourself or for others during formal assessments. The following are examples of academic misconduct:

· Cheating
· Plagiarism
· Falsification
· Gaining an unfair advantage
· Assisting others in committing academic misconduct, such as by using generative AI
· Falsification of records or official documents
· Unauthorised access to restricted information or data

· Unauthorised or unethical use of generative AI

Academic misconduct is a serious offense and can result in consequences such as module failure, research project failure, or even exclusion from Rennes SB. To prevent unintentional academic misconduct, it is essential to read and comply with the Rennes SB Academic Integrity Policy for Assessments (available on RISE). Regarding use of AI in learning and assessment please consult your professor for specific instructions pertaining to this module.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

1. Betti, Francisco, and Gayle Markovitz. “Industry Insights: 6 Dimensions to Surviving (and Thriving) in the Era of Uncertainty.” World Economic Forum, September 16, 2025. Updated February 3, 2026. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/09/industries-surviving-a-new-era-of-uncertainty/

2. Bremmer, Ian, and Cliff Kupchan. Top Risks 2025. Eurasia Group, 2025. https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025

3. Deloitte and Society for Corporate Governance. Board Practices Quarterly: Board Oversight of Geopolitical Risk. November 2025. https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone3/us/en/docs/programs/2025/us-board-practices-quarterly-board-oversight-of-geopolitical-risk-120525.pdf

4. Fjader, Christian O. Interdependence as Dependence: Economic Security in the Age of Global Interconnectedness. In Geo-Economics and Power Politics in the 21st Century, London: Routledge, 2020, pp. 28–42.

5. McKinsey Global Institute. Risk, Resilience, and Rebalancing in Global Value Chains. McKinsey & Company, 2020. https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/operations/our%20insights/risk%20resilience%20and%20rebalancing%20in%20global%20value%20chains/risk-resilience-and-rebalancing-in-global-value-chains-full-report-vh.pdf

6. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Managing Geopolitical Risk in a More Turbulent World: 7 Things to Consider. December 9, 2025. https://www.pwc.com/us/en/america-in-motion/managing-geopolitical-risk.html

7. Ripsman, Norrin M. 2021. Globalization, Deglobalization and Great Power Politics. International Affairs 97(5): 1317–1333. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab091

8. Sheffi, Yossi. The Resilient Enterprise: Overcoming Vulnerability for Competitive Advantage. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007. Chapter 1.

9. World Economic Forum. Global Risks Report 2025. Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025. Key Findings. https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2025/digest/

Additional Reading

1. Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission. Enterprise Risk Management Framework. https://www.coso.org/erm-framework

2. Csernatoni, Raluca. “Corporate Geopolitics: When Billionaires Rival States.” Strategic Europe, Carnegie Europe, October 30, 2025. https://carnegieendowment.org/europe/strategic-europe/2025/10/corporate-geopolitics-when-billionaires-rival-states

3. International Organization for Standardization ISO 31000: Risk Management Guidelines. https://www.iso.org/standard/65694.html

4. Klement, Joachim. Geo-Economics: The Interplay between Geopolitics, Economics, and Investment. CFA Institute Research Foundation, 2021. https://rpc.cfainstitute.org/research/foundation/2021/geo-economics

5. Martin, Bradley et al. Supply Chain Interdependence and Geopolitical Vulnerability: The Case of Taiwan and High-End Semiconductors. RAND Corporation. 2023. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2354-1.html

6. OECD. OECD Supply Chain Resilience Review. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2025. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/06/oecd-supply-chain-resilience-review_9930d256.html Executive Summary

7. Roberts, Anthea, Nicolas Lamp, and J. P. Singh. Six Faces of Globalization: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why It Matters. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. Introduction.

8. Szczepaski, Marcin. Resilience of Global Supply Chains: Challenges and Solutions. European Parliamentary Research Service, 2021. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698815/EPRS_BRI%282021%29698815_EN.pdf

9. World Economic Forum. “Strategic Foresight: How Future-Ready Organizations Navigate Uncertainty.” July 2025. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/07/strategic-foresight-future-ready-organizations-wef/

MODULE PLAN SESSIONS :

Plan Session 01 :

This session introduces geopolitics as a way to understand how global transformations, disruptions, and uncertainty affect companies and business environments. Students explore how geopolitical developments influence supply chains, technologies, regulations, markets, and organizational decisions.
The session focuses on practical understanding rather than theory. Students work in groups, discuss examples of geopolitical-business disruptions, and select one recurring company case that they will analyze throughout the course.
The objective of the session is to help students understand: “Why can geopolitics matter for this company?”

Key Questions
1. What is geopolitics?
2. Why does geopolitics matter for business?
3. How can global transformations affect companies?
4. Why are organizations increasingly exposed to uncertainty?

Required Reading
1. World Economic Forum. Global Risks Report 2025. Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025. Key Findings. https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2025/digest/
2. Bremmer, Ian, and Cliff Kupchan. Top Risks 2025. Eurasia Group, 2025. https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025
3. Betti, Francisco, and Gayle Markovitz. “Industry Insights: 6 Dimensions to Surviving (and Thriving) in the Era of Uncertainty.” World Economic Forum, September 16, 2025. Updated February 3, 2026. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/09/industries-surviving-a-new-era-of-uncertainty/

Optional Reading
1. Roberts, Anthea, Nicolas Lamp, and J. P. Singh. Six Faces of Globalization: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why It Matters. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. Introduction.

In-Class Activities
- Introduction of the course and a short lecture on geopolitics and business environments
- Discussion of recent geopolitical-business disruptions
- Group selection of recurring company cases

Assignments / Deadlines
- Students read the “Required reading”
- Students prepare one analytical comment or question based on the required reading

Plan Session 02 :

This session examines how environmental, social, and digital transformations reshape global business environments and geopolitical dynamics. Students explore the drivers behind these transformations and analyze how they create new dilemmas for states, companies, and societies. The discussion focuses on the tensions between sustainability, security, technological innovation, resilience, and economic interdependence.

Through group work and practical analytical exercises, students identify how transformations can generate both risks and strategic opportunities for organizations. The session introduces analytical tools that help students structure complexity and better understand how global transformations affect business decision-making.

Key Questions
1. What stands behind environmental, social, and digital transformations?
2. Which geopolitical-business dilemmas emerge from these transformations?
3. Which actors influence these transformations and which are influenced by them?
4. How can transformations create both risks and opportunities?

Required Reading
1. Ripsman, Norrin M. 2021. Globalization, Deglobalization and Great Power Politics. International Affairs 97(5): 1317–1333. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiab091
2. World Economic Forum. Global Risks Report 2025. Geneva: World Economic Forum, 2025. Key Findings. https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-risks-report-2025/digest/
3. Bremmer, Ian, and Cliff Kupchan. Top Risks 2025. Eurasia Group, 2025. https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2025

4. Betti, Francisco, and Gayle Markovitz. “Industry Insights: 6 Dimensions to Surviving (and Thriving) in the Era of Uncertainty.” World Economic Forum, September 16, 2025. Updated February 3, 2026. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/09/industries-surviving-a-new-era-of-uncertainty/

In-Class Activities

- Short introductory lecture on global transformations and business environments; introduction of PESTEL and stakeholder-mapping tools
- Group identification of major transformation-driven dilemmas and application of the PESTEL and stakeholder-mapping tools
- Group discussion of the findings

Assignments / Deadlines

- Students read the “Required reading”
- Students prepare short company description and its international activities
- Students identify one transformation affecting their selected company and briefly explain one related geopolitical-business dilemma

Plan Session 03 :

This session examines how geopolitical interdependencies create organizational vulnerabilities and strategic exposure. Building on the transformation and stakeholder analyses conducted in Session 2, students investigate where their selected companies are dependent on suppliers, technologies, logistics networks, markets, regulations, or critical resources.

The session focuses on identifying how interdependence can simultaneously create opportunities and vulnerabilities for organizations operating in global environments. Through practical analytical exercises, students apply Dependency Mapping to their recurring company cases and evaluate how disruptions may affect business operations and strategic stability.

The session concludes with Assessment 1, which evaluates students’ ability to apply the analytical tools introduced in Sessions 2 and 3.

Key Questions

1. Where is the organization dependent?
2. Which vulnerabilities create strategic exposure?
3. How can geopolitical disruptions affect operations?
4. Which organizational areas are the most fragile?

Required Reading

1. Fjader, Christian O. Interdependence as Dependence: Economic Security in the Age of Global Interconnectedness. In Geo-Economics and Power Politics in the 21st Century, London: Routledge, 2020, pp. 28–42.
2. McKinsey Global Institute. Risk, Resilience, and Rebalancing in Global Value Chains. McKinsey & Company, 2020. https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/operations/our%20insights/risk%20resilience%20and%20rebalancing%20in%20global%20value%20chains/risk-resilience-and-rebalancing-in-global-value-chains-full-report-vh.pdf Chapter 1, pp. 21-31
3. Sheffi, Yossi. The Resilient Enterprise: Overcoming Vulnerability for Competitive Advantage. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007. Chapter 1.

Optional Reading

1. OECD. OECD Supply Chain Resilience Review. Paris: OECD Publishing, 2025. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/06/oecd-supply-chain-resilience-review_9930d256.html Executive Summary
2. Szczepaski, Marcin. Resilience of Global Supply Chains: Challenges and Solutions. European Parliamentary Research Service, 2021. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698815/EPRS_BRI%282021%29698815_EN.pdf

In-Class Activities

- Short lecture on strategic interdependencies, organizational exposure and introduction of the analytical tool Dependency Mapping
- Based on the findings of session 2 group work on recurring company cases to make Dependency Mapping: identification of key dependencies, analysis of organizational exposure, discussion of possible consequences of disruption
- Assessment 1: Group analytical report and presentation based on the selected company case with application of PESTEL, stakeholder- and dependency mapping tools.

Assignments / Deadlines
- Students read the “Required reading”
- Students prepare/check the notes and papers from the previous sessions and get ready for assessment 1

Plan Session 04 :

This session focuses on geopolitical-business risks and uncertainty. Using the dependencies identified in Session 3, students evaluate which risks may affect their selected company and assess their potential impact on organizational activities and strategic stability.

The session introduces the Risk Matrix as a practical tool for identifying, prioritizing, and evaluating geopolitical-business risks. The objective is not to predict the future but to develop structured reasoning under uncertainty and support better organizational decision-making.

Key Questions
1. Which geopolitical risks may affect the organization?
2. Which risks require managerial attention first?
3. How can risks affect organizational stability?
4. How should organizations think under uncertainty?

Required Reading
1. Deloitte and Society for Corporate Governance. Board Practices Quarterly: Board Oversight of Geopolitical Risk. November 2025. https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone3/us/en/docs/programs/2025/us-board-practices-quarterly-board-oversight-of-geopolitical-risk-120525.pdf

Optional Reading
1. Martin, Bradley et al. Supply Chain Interdependence and Geopolitical Vulnerability: The Case of Taiwan and High-End Semiconductors. RAND Corporation. 2023. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA2354-1.html
2. Klement, Joachim. Geo-Economics: The Interplay between Geopolitics, Economics, and Investment. CFA Institute Research Foundation, 2021. https://rpc.cfainstitute.org/research/foundation/2021/geo-economics
3. International Organization for Standardization ISO 31000: Risk Management Guidelines. https://www.iso.org/standard/65694.html
4. Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission. Enterprise Risk Management Framework. https://www.coso.org/erm-framework

In-Class Activities
- Short lecture on analytical tool Risk Matrix regarding geopolitical-business risks and uncertainty
- Based on the findings of sessions 2-3 group work on recurring company cases to make risk matrix identification and evaluation
- Group discussion of risk prioritization

Assignments / Deadlines
- Students read the “Required reading”
- Students prepare/check the notes and papers from the previous sessions
- Top 5 geopolitical-business risks

Plan Session 05 :

This final session focuses on organizational resilience, strategic adaptation, and realistic responses to geopolitical uncertainty. Based on the results of the previous sessions, students formulate strategic recommendations for their company case.
The session functions as the synthesis of the course:
Transformations Stakeholders Dependencies Risks Strategic Responses

Students evaluate how organizations can reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience, and adapt to geopolitical uncertainty. The emphasis is placed on practical decision-making and the prioritization of realistic actions rather than on theoretical discussion.

Key Questions
1. How can organizations adapt to uncertainty?
2. Which strategic responses are realistic?
3. What should organizations prioritize?

4. Which trade-offs must managers accept?

Required Reading

1. McKinsey Global Institute. Risk, Resilience, and Rebalancing in Global Value Chains. McKinsey & Company, 2020. https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/operations/our%20insights/risk%20resilience%20and%20rebalancing%20in%20global%20value%20chains/risk-resilience-and-rebalancing-in-global-value-chains-full-report-vh.pdf Chapter 5, pp. 73-84

2. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Managing Geopolitical Risk in a More Turbulent World: 7 Things to Consider. December 9, 2025. https://www.pwc.com/us/en/america-in-motion/managing-geopolitical-risk.html

Optional Reading

1. World Economic Forum. “Strategic Foresight: How Future-Ready Organizations Navigate Uncertainty.” July 2025. https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/07/strategic-foresight-future-ready-organizations-wef/

2. Csernatoni, Raluca. “Corporate Geopolitics: When Billionaires Rival States.” Strategic Europe, Carnegie Europe, October 30, 2025. https://carnegieendowment.org/europe/strategic-europe/2025/10/corporate-geopolitics-when-billionaires-rival-states

In-Class Activities

- Short lecture on strategic adaptation and introduction of the Strategic Response Framework
- Based on the findings of sessions 2-4 group work on recurring company cases to perform Strategic Response Framework: identification of strategic response options, prioritization of actions, discussion of trade-offs and implementation challenges
- Assessment 2:

Individual written analytical exercise based on a new company case provided by the instructor to evaluate the application of Risk Matrix and Strategic Response Framework tools

Assignments / Deadlines

- Students read the “Required reading”
- Students prepare/check the notes and papers from the previous sessions and get ready for assessment 2