THINKTANK
CORPORATE RESILIENCE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Geopolitical Change, AI and Entrepreneurial Options

- Summary for Corporate Management -

VSW
Bundesverband

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MBA STRATEGY, GLOBAL RISK AND SECURITY MANAGEMENT

Executive Summary for Corporate Management

Summary of Strategic White Paper 02 “Geopolitical Change, AI and Entrepreneurial Options” and of Operational Guide 01 to White Paper 02

> **Geopolitical change has a direct impact on the achievement of corporate objectives.** Market access, margins, delivery capability, investment decisions and companies' ability to act increasingly depend on political conditions that were long considered stable. Free trade, reliable partnerships and predictable markets can no longer be taken for granted. Resilience thus becomes part of competitiveness: the point is not to predict crises, but to achieve corporate objectives even under changed conditions.

What is changing

- **Several conflicts are having an effect at the same time.** The war in Ukraine, the war in the Middle East with restrictions on shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and the tensions surrounding Taiwan affect energy, logistics and predictability in parallel.
- **Trade is becoming political.** Tariffs, export controls and sanctions are changing market access and cost structures, even between long-standing partners.
- **Technology and Artificial Intelligence are becoming geopolitical.** Semiconductors, cloud, data centers and AI models are concentrated among a few providers and regions; this creates new dependencies.
- **Hybrid threats are increasing.** Cyberattacks, espionage, sabotage and disinformation are also directed against companies, their employees and executives.
- **Risks reinforce each other.** A single event can affect several business areas at once via interconnected systems.

Impact on corporate objectives

White Paper 02 describes how geopolitical developments affect the key dimensions of corporate value creation:

Dimension	Impact on the achievement of objectives
Markets and revenue	Market access becomes politically conditional; export controls and sanctions can close off sales areas.
Supply chains and delivery capability	Dependencies on individual suppliers or regions become a business risk; the geographical reorganization of supply chains becomes a strategic decision.
Costs and margin	Raw materials and energy are used geopolitically; bottlenecks and price increases have a direct impact on costs.

Dimension	Impact on the achievement of objectives
Capital and investment	Geopolitical risks increase financing costs, make investment decisions more difficult and raise regulatory requirements.
Innovation and technology	Technology transfer is restricted; the protection of intellectual property and dual-use controls are gaining in importance.
Talent and locations	Skilled immigration and the attractiveness of locations acquire a geopolitical dimension; stability becomes a location factor.

Approaches to solutions

Companies that incorporate geopolitical developments into their management can achieve their objectives more reliably even under uncertainty. Three approaches are at the center; Operational Guide 01 provides working tools for them.

Approach	Contribution to corporate objectives	In-depth coverage in the guide
Incorporate geopolitics into strategy and management	A geopolitical situational picture with early indicators links external developments with strategy, investment and risk decisions. Decisions are made earlier and on a better basis.	Module 1, Chapter 2 Module 2, Chapter 3 Module 3, Chapter 4
Know and safeguard critical value creation	Transparency about critical dependencies, a defined minimum value creation and scenario-based stress tests protect delivery capability, revenue and customer relationships even in severe crises.	Module 4, Chapter 5 Module 5, Chapter 6 Module 3, Chapter 4
Seize opportunities through diversification and technology	New markets, regional value creation and technological competence open up growth. Defense and dual-use, infrastructure and energy, digital sovereignty including AI, and regional value creation are regarded as strategic opportunity areas of the coming years.	Module 8, Chapter 9 Module 9, Chapter 10

In addition, the state is creating new support structures, for example with the National Economic Protection Strategy (Nationale Wirtschaftsschutzstrategie) and the Operational Plan for Germany (Operationsplan Deutschland). However, they do not relieve companies of their own preparedness.

Guiding questions for corporate management

1. **Which dependencies would most endanger our corporate objectives in the event of a disruption?**

2. **Which services must we be able to maintain even in a severe crisis?**

3. **Which geopolitical scenario would have the greatest impact on our business model?**

4. **How do geopolitical developments currently feed into our strategy and investment decisions?**

5. **What growth opportunities does geopolitical change offer us?**

> **The central leadership task is to systematically reduce geopolitical vulnerabilities while at the same time using the strategic opportunities of change for the company's own objectives.**

Basis: Strategic White Paper 02 “Geopolitical Change, AI and Entrepreneurial Options” and Operational Guide 01 to White Paper 02 of the ThinkTank Corporate Resilience. All evidence and sources as well as the working modules can be found there.

The White Paper, Operational Guide and Executive Summary are available at:

The ThinkTank Corporate Resilience and the VSW Bundesverband

At the interface of business, government and academia, the ThinkTank Corporate Resilience positions itself as a think tank and the VSW Bundesverband as the umbrella organization of the regional security associations of German industry. The aim is to shape resilience as a shared value-creating task, to provide orientation and to strengthen the dialogue between companies, policymakers and public authorities. In doing so, the ThinkTank Corporate Resilience supports the VSW's Vision 2029 of establishing itself as the leading authority for economic protection - as a point of contact, a source of ideas and a platform for knowledge transfer, further education and cooperation.

On behalf of the publisher ThinkTank Corporate Resilience

Prof. Dr. Marc Knoppe Johannes Strümpfel

Publisher:

ThinkTank Corporate Resilience: *Where business and academia think ahead*

The **ThinkTank Corporate Resilience** creates a platform on which strategic trends, geopolitical analyses and future scenarios from the resilience perspective of Chief Security Officers are brought together with the business perspective of CEOs, executive boards, supervisory boards and shareholders. It emerged from the close cooperation between business and academia at Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt in the field of "Value Creation through Corporate Security and Resilience" („Wertschöpfung durch Corporate Security und Resilienz") and is closely linked to the MBA program **Strategy, Global Risk & Security Management (Resilience Management)**.

The ThinkTank was initiated to offer C-suite representatives, Chief Security Officers and other executives from all business areas as well as public authorities a forum for forward-looking thinking and strategic exchange on systemic risks **from a business perspective**.

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Do you have any questions or suggestions?

Use our feedback questionnaire or contact our ThinkTank directly. Your input is valuable and can make a decisive contribution to making future publications even more practical and relevant.

Visit our FAQs to find answers to frequently asked questions and to explore the topic in greater depth.

👉 **Contact & feedback**

Executive Summary to White Paper 02 - ThinkTank Corporate Resilience, November 2026