BOARD BRIEFING

November 2025

Geopolitics, Technology and the New Landscape of Corporate Risk

Navigating the intricate forces shaping tomorrow's business environment.

Executive Summary: This briefing outlines the critical interplay between global geopolitical shifts, rapid technological advancements, and their profound impact on corporate risk. We delve into emerging threats and opportunities, offering strategic insights to fortify resilience and drive sustained growth in an increasingly volatile world.

Forward 1919 Global Strategic Advisory

Sevinc Kader

CEO, Forward 1919 Global Strategic Advisory & Head of European AI Hub | Brussels

Introduction: Technology at the Center of Global Affairs

Technology has become a central element of international affairs. It shapes economic strength, national security and corporate strategy at the same time. Political decisions now determine who gets access to chips, data, computing power and even electricity.

Boards need a clear view of these shifts because they influence almost every part of long-term competitiveness.

The Three Forces Driving Today's Technology Politics

Three forces define the current landscape:

Strategic Competition

The first is strategic competition between the United States and China. It creates pressure on chip production, research spending and mineral supply chains. The United States controls most of the advanced semiconductor market. China dominates mineral processing and several mid-range manufacturing stages.

Digital Infrastructure Control

The second is the search for control over digital infrastructure. Europe emphasises rules and trust. The United States emphasises industrial capacity. China emphasises state direction and national self-reliance.

Tools for Disruption

The third is the rise of new tools for disruption. Cyber attacks, deepfakes and information manipulation spread quickly across borders and create sudden shocks.

Each of these forces affects how firms approach investment, compliance and risk.

A Fragmenting Technology Landscape

The world is moving away from a single, shared technology ecosystem.

Three broad systems are emerging: an American system (private research), a Chinese system (state planning), and a European system (rules and public trust).

> This separation is becoming permanent. Restrictions on chip exports, mineral controls, and data rules have created lasting divisions. Diplomatic relations may fluctuate, but the overall direction remains consistent.

Companies will require separate operating plans for different regions.

The Four Ingredients of Technological Power

Directors were encouraged to understand four essential inputs that shape technological strength:

1

Computing Resources

Chips, servers, and reliable electricity are strategic assets. Advanced models require thousands of high-end chips, primarily produced in Taiwan and the U.S., with assembly in Southeast Asia.

2

Data

Data volume and quality impact model performance. Many nations are imposing stricter rules on cross-border data movement; Europe leads, with India, Brazil, and African countries following suit.

3

Technical Models & Software

Some are open, others proprietary. Rapid innovation pressures firms to keep pace without undue risk.

4

Talent

Demand for technical talent far exceeds supply. Access to visas, research clusters, and universities shapes long-term competitiveness.

Control over at least two of these inputs is often sufficient to shape an industry.

Market Growth, Investment Trends and Energy Dependencies

Expanding Markets and Investment

Markets for advanced digital technologies are expanding rapidly.

Several forecasts place their value above **three trillion dollars** by the early 2030s.

Research spending continues to rise, especially in the United States and China.

According to the 2025 Stanford Digital Economy Index, private investment in large-scale models exceeded sixty billion dollars last year. The figure was around twenty billion in 2020.

These numbers help explain why governments treat technology as a strategic asset and why boards need long-term plans rather than short experiments.

The Rising Importance of Energy and Water

Electricity has become a central economic variable.

Data centres already consume close to three percent of global electricity, according to the International Energy Agency. Demand may double by the end of the decade.

4

Gigawatts in 2024

Power needs linked to digital infrastructure in the United States

100+

Gigawatts by 2035

Projected power needs in the United States

Water use is also becoming more sensitive. Cooling systems rely on steady water access and communities are more alert to resource pressure.

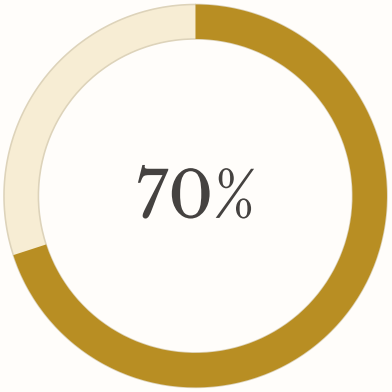
Countries that can provide stable, clean and affordable energy will attract more investment.

Boards should place site selection, electricity contracts and long-term sustainability at the centre of strategy.

Supply Chain Concentration and Government Policy

Supply Chains and Resource Dependencies

Semiconductor production is one of the most concentrated industries in the world.



Advanced Chips from Taiwan & South Korea

- The most sophisticated lithography machines are produced by one European firm.
- The high-precision lenses inside these machines come from a single supplier in a neighbouring country.
- China processes the majority of rare-earth minerals used in chips, batteries and turbines.

This creates leverage points that can be affected by export controls or political tensions.

Boards should map these dependencies for hardware, minerals, cloud providers and technical partners.

Government Policy and Industrial Strategy

- Amerika Birleşik Devletleri: Mevcut ve önceki yönetimler, yerli teknoloji üretimini desteklemektedir. Yöntemleri farklı olsa da hedefleri aynıdır; biri sübvansiyonlara, diğeri ise tarifelere ve hisse senedi yatırımlarına ağırlık vermektedir.
- Çin: Yabancı kontrollerle kısıtlanan alanlarda kendine yeterliliğe doğru ilerlemektedir.
- Avrupa: Rekabet gücünü korumaya çalışırken standartlar, güvenlik ve düzenlemeler aracılığıyla egemenlik arayışındadır.

Regulation in Practice

Europe

Europe's new framework is broad and will be phased in from 2026.

United States

The United States does not have a single national system, so states like California have started setting their own rules.

China

China links its regulatory system to national industrial goals.

Because of this fragmentation, firms will need separate compliance strategies for Europe, North America and Asia.

Boards should set one ethical standard across the organisation even when laws differ.

Critical Dependencies and Trust Considerations

Dependence on Third Parties

Modern digital infrastructure depends heavily on external providers. Three cloud companies control a large share of global capacity, and only a few firms produce leading chips.

Dependence on such a small group increases operational and political risk.

Boards should review third-party relationships, identify single points of failure and develop alternative supplier pathways where possible.

Public Trust and Social Considerations

Public attitudes toward new technologies differ by region. Surveys show more optimism in parts of Asia and North America and more caution in Europe.

People worry about job security, privacy, misinformation and the impact on children, and these concerns shape regulation and adoption.

> Companies with transparent governance and clear safeguards earn higher trust. This becomes a competitive advantage as societies become more sensitive to digital risks.