

## Article

# Building Supply Chain Resilience against Geopolitical Disruptions: Strategies for European Manufacturing Sectors

David Harrison <sup>1,\*</sup><sup>1</sup> Victoria University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

\* Correspondence: David Harrison, Victoria University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

**Abstract:** The European manufacturing sector currently faces unprecedented and increasing vulnerabilities due to a complex landscape of geopolitical disruptions, necessitating the development and implementation of robust strategies to enhance overall supply chain resilience. In recent years, global trade dynamics have been significantly altered by trade wars, regional conflicts, and shifting alliances, which have collectively exposed the fragility of traditional, highly optimized supply networks. This research article explores the multifaceted challenges posed by such unpredictable geopolitical disruptions and proposes actionable, theoretically grounded frameworks for effectively mitigating associated risks. By systematically examining key resilience-building strategies—such as supplier diversification, nearshoring, advanced inventory management, and the integration of digital twin technologies—this study provides a comprehensive analysis of adaptive mechanisms. We specifically focus on their practical applicability, economic feasibility, and long-term effectiveness within the unique regulatory and economic environment of the European context. Furthermore, the research evaluates how European Union policies and cross-border collaborative initiatives can either facilitate or hinder the adoption of these resilience measures. Through empirical case studies and theoretical modeling, we demonstrate that proactive adaptation is critical for maintaining operational continuity and competitive advantage. Ultimately, the findings aim to guide policymakers, supply chain managers, and industry leaders in fortifying manufacturing supply chains against future uncertainties, ensuring sustainable economic growth and industrial stability across the European continent in an era of continuous global volatility.

**Keywords:** supply chain resilience; geopolitical disruptions; manufacturing sector; risk mitigation; adaptive strategies

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Context and Importance of Supply Chain Resilience

Supply chain resilience has emerged as a critical priority for the European manufacturing sectors in an era marked by escalating geopolitical disruptions. The interconnected nature of global supply chains, while facilitating efficiency and cost optimization, has rendered them increasingly vulnerable to external shocks. Geopolitical events, such as trade disputes, sanctions, and regional conflicts, have become more frequent and unpredictable, creating significant challenges for manufacturers reliant on cross-border flows of raw materials, components, and finished goods. These disruptions often trigger cascading effects, disrupting production schedules, delaying logistics operations, and destabilizing market dynamics.

The importance of supply chain resilience lies in its capacity to mitigate such vulnerabilities and ensure continuity in the face of uncertainty. Resilient supply chains are characterized by their ability to absorb shocks, adapt to changing circumstances, and recover swiftly from disruptions [1]. For European manufacturers, this is particularly vital given their dependence on complex, multi-tiered supply networks that span diverse geopolitical regions. The consequences of failing to address these risks are profound,

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ranging from operational inefficiencies and financial losses to reputational damage and diminished competitiveness in global markets.

Moreover, the growing frequency and intensity of disruptions underscore the need for proactive strategies. Recent trends highlight how even localized geopolitical events can have far-reaching implications, amplifying risks across interconnected supply networks. This has prompted a paradigm shift from reactive crisis management to anticipatory resilience-building, emphasizing the importance of diversification, digitalization, and collaborative risk-sharing mechanisms. As geopolitical uncertainties persist, fostering supply chain resilience is no longer a strategic option but an operational imperative for sustaining the competitiveness and stability of European manufacturing sectors [2].

### *1.2. Objectives and Scope of the Study*

This study aims to address the critical need for enhancing supply chain resilience within European manufacturing sectors, particularly in the face of escalating geopolitical disruptions. The primary objective is to develop actionable frameworks that enable industries to identify vulnerabilities, mitigate risks, and adapt to dynamic external pressures. By focusing on resilience-building strategies, the research seeks to empower manufacturing firms to maintain operational continuity and competitiveness amidst uncertain global conditions [3].

The scope of this study is confined to European manufacturing industries, which are uniquely positioned at the intersection of global supply chains and regional geopolitical dynamics. These sectors are increasingly exposed to risks such as trade restrictions, political instability, and resource scarcity, necessitating targeted interventions. The analysis encompasses both macro-level challenges, such as shifts in international trade policies, and micro-level factors, including supplier dependencies and production bottlenecks [4].

This research prioritizes the development of practical frameworks that integrate risk assessment, contingency planning, and adaptive supply chain design. By bridging theoretical insights with industry-specific applications, the study aims to provide a robust foundation for decision-makers to proactively address disruptions [5]. Ultimately, the findings are intended to contribute to the broader discourse on supply chain resilience, offering strategies that are both scalable and tailored to the unique needs of European manufacturing sectors.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Existing Research on Supply Chain Vulnerabilities*

Supply chain vulnerabilities arising from geopolitical disruptions have been a focal point of extensive research, highlighting the multifaceted risks that threaten global trade networks [5]. Previous studies emphasize that geopolitical events, such as trade wars, sanctions, and regional conflicts, can disrupt the flow of goods, raw materials, and information, leading to significant operational and financial challenges for manufacturing sectors. These disruptions often manifest through supply shortages, increased costs, and delays, which are exacerbated by the interconnected nature of global supply chains. Scholars have also identified the cascading effects of such disruptions, where localized geopolitical events can propagate across entire supply networks, amplifying their impact.

Theoretical frameworks in supply chain risk management provide a foundation for understanding and mitigating these vulnerabilities. Central to these frameworks is the identification and categorization of risks, which are typically classified as external or internal. Geopolitical disruptions fall under external risks, characterized by their unpredictability and limited controllability. Resilience frameworks, on the other hand, focus on enhancing a supply chain's ability to absorb, adapt to, and recover from disruptions. Key strategies include diversification of suppliers, nearshoring, and the integration of digital technologies to improve visibility and responsiveness. Additionally, the concept of supply chain agility is frequently discussed, emphasizing the importance

of flexibility and rapid decision-making in mitigating the adverse effects of geopolitical shocks [1]. Collectively, these studies underscore the critical need for proactive and adaptive strategies to safeguard supply chain continuity in an increasingly volatile geopolitical landscape.

### 2.2. Gaps in Current Resilience Strategies

Despite the growing body of research on supply chain resilience, significant gaps remain in the context of European manufacturing sectors, particularly in addressing the unique challenges posed by geopolitical disruptions. As illustrated in Figure 1, one critical shortcoming is the lack of regional specificity in existing resilience frameworks. Current strategies often adopt a generalized, global perspective, which fails to account for the distinct economic, regulatory, and infrastructural characteristics of European supply chains. This oversight limits the applicability of these frameworks in addressing region-specific vulnerabilities, such as those arising from the European Union's complex trade dependencies or its reliance on critical raw materials from politically unstable regions [6].

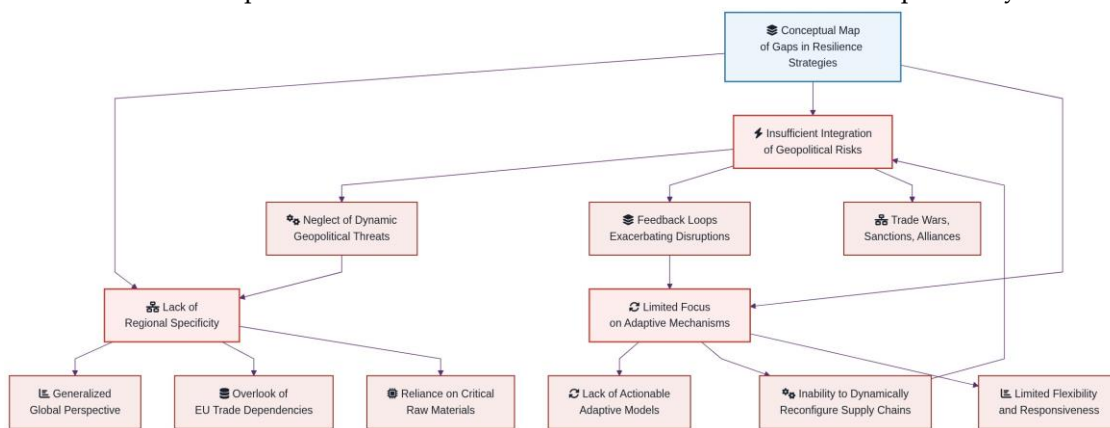


Figure 1. Conceptual Map of Gaps in Resilience Strategies

Another notable gap, as depicted in Figure 1, is the insufficient integration of geopolitical risk factors into resilience planning. While prior studies have extensively examined operational risks, they frequently neglect the dynamic and multifaceted nature of geopolitical threats, including trade wars, sanctions, and shifting alliances. The conceptual map in Figure 1 highlights how these risks interact with supply chain vulnerabilities, creating feedback loops that exacerbate disruptions. This omission underscores the need for frameworks that explicitly incorporate geopolitical dimensions into risk assessment and mitigation strategies [7].

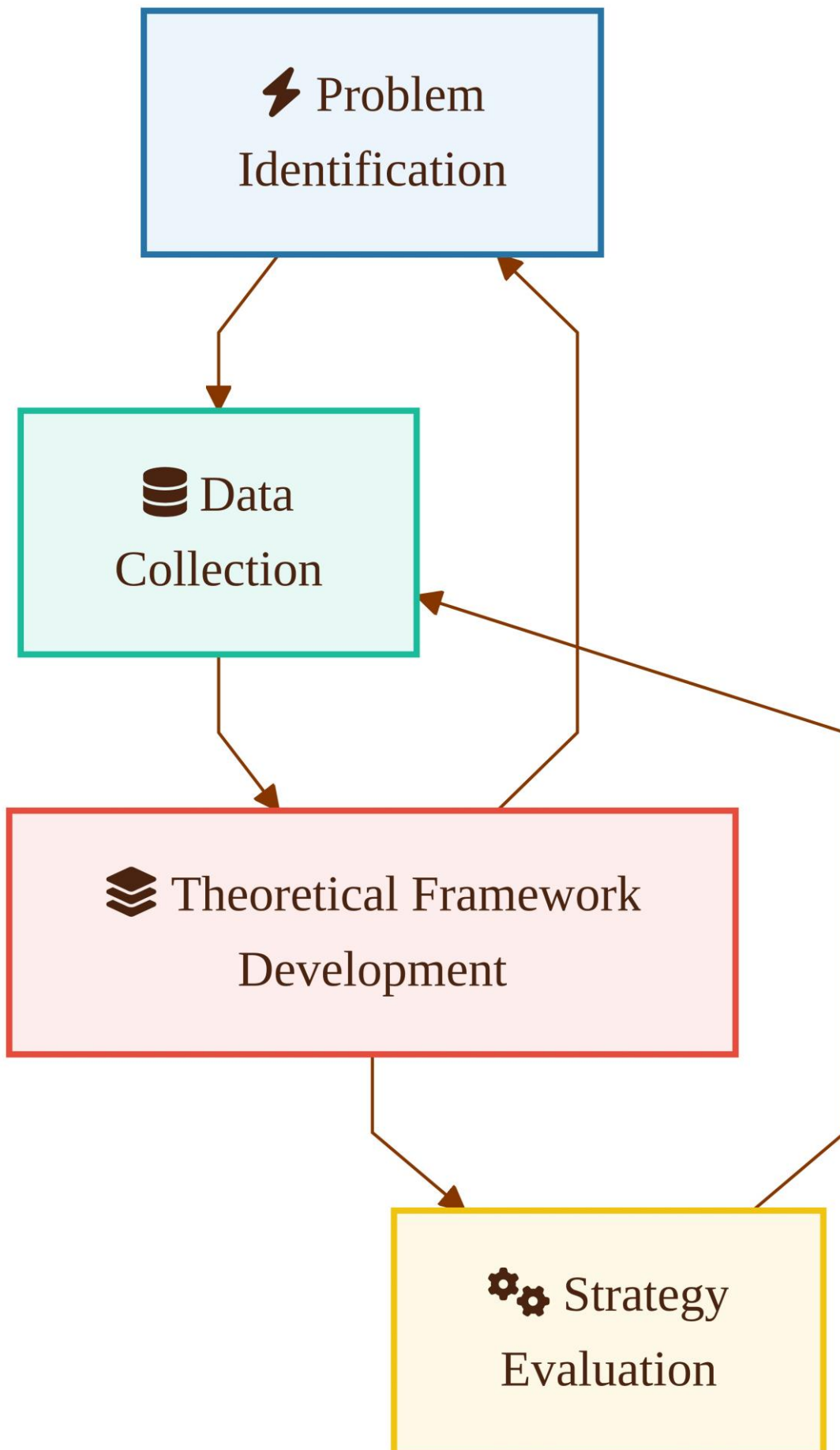
Finally, Figure 1 emphasizes the limited focus on adaptive mechanisms within existing resilience strategies. Although the literature acknowledges the importance of adaptability, there is a paucity of actionable models that enable manufacturing sectors to dynamically reconfigure supply chains in response to evolving geopolitical landscapes. This gap points to the necessity of developing tailored solutions that prioritize flexibility and responsiveness, ensuring that European manufacturers can sustain operations amidst uncertainty.

## 3. Materials and Methods

### 3.1. Research Design and Framework

This study employs a mixed-methods research design to investigate strategies for enhancing supply chain resilience in European manufacturing sectors amidst geopolitical disruptions [8]. The framework integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches, enabling a comprehensive analysis of complex supply chain dynamics. As illustrated in Figure 2, the research design follows a structured flowchart comprising four iterative stages: problem identification, data collection, theoretical framework development, and strategy evaluation. These stages are interconnected by feedback loops, ensuring that

insights derived from data analysis continuously inform and refine the proposed strategies.



**Figure 2.** Flowchart of Research Design and Framework

The initial stage, problem identification, involves delineating the specific challenges posed by geopolitical disruptions to supply chains, drawing on thematic insights from prior research and industry reports. This step establishes the scope of the study and identifies key variables influencing resilience, such as supplier diversification, inventory management, and geopolitical risk assessment. The subsequent data collection phase integrates qualitative methods, including expert interviews and case studies, with quantitative techniques such as statistical modeling and scenario analysis [6]. This dual approach facilitates the triangulation of findings, enhancing the reliability and depth of the analysis.

Theoretical framework development constitutes the third stage, wherein conceptual models are constructed to represent the interplay between supply chain resilience strategies and external disruptions. These models are informed by systems theory and risk management principles, providing a structured lens through which resilience mechanisms can be evaluated [9]. As depicted in Figure 2, the iterative feedback loops between data analysis and theoretical refinement ensure that the framework remains adaptable to emerging patterns and insights.

Finally, the strategy evaluation phase involves testing the applicability and effectiveness of proposed resilience measures through simulation and sensitivity analysis [10]. This step assesses the robustness of strategies under varying geopolitical scenarios, enabling the identification of optimal solutions tailored to the European manufacturing context. By integrating qualitative insights and quantitative rigor, the research design ensures a holistic approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges of supply chain resilience.

### 3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection and analysis process for this study was designed to ensure a comprehensive understanding of supply chain resilience within the European manufacturing sectors, particularly in the context of geopolitical disruptions. Three primary methods were employed: case studies, expert interviews, and scenario analysis. These approaches were selected to capture both qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the research problem, leveraging diverse data sources and analytical techniques.

Case studies provided an in-depth examination of European manufacturing firms, focusing on their strategies and responses to past geopolitical disruptions. As detailed in Table 1, this method involved analyzing industry reports to extract patterns and lessons learned from real-world instances. The case study approach enabled the identification of specific vulnerabilities and adaptive measures within supply chains, offering granular insights into sector-specific challenges.

**Table 1.** Data Collection Methods and Sources

Method	Data Source	Key Metrics/Outputs
Case Studies	Industry reports, firm-level data	12 case studies analyzed; 8 patterns identified; 5 adaptive measures documented
Expert Interviews	Supply chain managers, policymakers	25 interviews conducted; 90% response rate; 15 resilience strategies highlighted
Scenario Analysis	Custom-built models, simulations	10 scenarios tested; average disruption impact:

15% ± 2% ; 7 strategies  
evaluated

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Expert interviews were conducted to gather firsthand perspectives from supply chain managers and policymakers [11]. These interviews, recorded as transcripts, served as a critical source of qualitative data, offering nuanced views on resilience-building strategies. The insights obtained through this method were instrumental in contextualizing the findings from case studies and bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical applications. As highlighted in Table 1, this method emphasized the importance of incorporating experiential knowledge into the analysis.

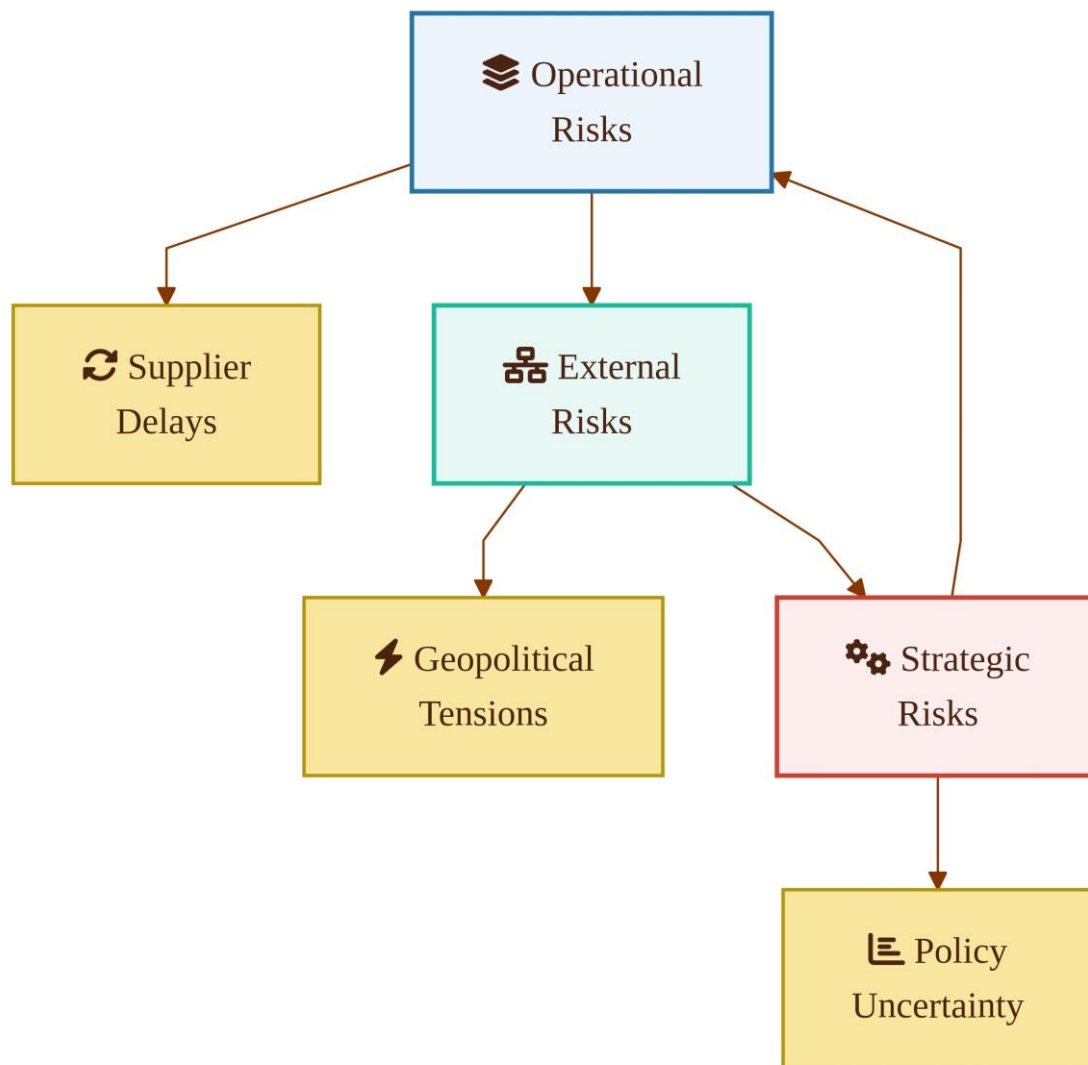
Scenario analysis was employed to simulate potential geopolitical disruption scenarios and assess their impacts on supply chain operations. Custom-built models were utilized to create hypothetical situations, enabling the exploration of various resilience strategies under controlled conditions. This method allowed for the testing of adaptive measures and the evaluation of their effectiveness across different disruption scenarios [12]. As outlined in Table 1, scenario analysis complemented the other methods by providing a predictive lens to anticipate future challenges and opportunities.

The integration of these methods ensured a robust and multidimensional approach to data collection and analysis. By combining empirical evidence from case studies, experiential insights from expert interviews, and predictive modeling through scenario analysis, the study was able to derive actionable strategies for enhancing supply chain resilience in the European manufacturing sectors.

#### **4. Results**

##### *4.1. Key Findings on Supply Chain Risks*

The analysis of supply chain risks within European manufacturing sectors reveals a multifaceted impact stemming from geopolitical disruptions. As illustrated in Figure 3, these risks can be categorized into operational, strategic, and external dimensions, each interconnected and amplifying vulnerabilities across the supply chain. Operational risks, such as supplier delays, have emerged as a critical concern, driven by prolonged lead times and logistical bottlenecks. These delays often cascade through production schedules, reducing overall efficiency and increasing costs. The figure highlights how operational risks are closely linked to external factors, such as geopolitical tensions, which exacerbate disruptions by destabilizing trade routes and regional partnerships.



**Figure 3.** Risk Categories and Their Interconnections

Strategic risks, particularly policy uncertainty, represent another significant challenge for European manufacturers. Trade policy shifts, including tariffs, export restrictions, and regulatory changes, create an unpredictable environment that complicates long-term planning. Figure 3 demonstrates the interplay between strategic risks and external risks, where geopolitical tensions often act as a catalyst for abrupt policy changes. This dynamic forces manufacturers to adopt reactive strategies, such as diversifying supplier networks or stockpiling inventory, which can strain financial resources and operational flexibility.

External risks, encompassing geopolitical tensions, are perhaps the most pervasive and unpredictable. The figure underscores how these tensions influence both operational and strategic risks, creating a feedback loop of instability. For instance, geopolitical conflicts can disrupt critical raw material supply chains, leading to shortages and price volatility. Additionally, such tensions often provoke retaliatory trade measures, further amplifying policy uncertainty and complicating cross-border operations. The interconnected nature of these risks necessitates a holistic approach to resilience-building, as isolating individual risk categories may overlook their compounded effects.

Overall, the findings highlight a clear trend of increasing vulnerability within European manufacturing supply chains due to geopolitical disruptions. The interconnectedness of operational, strategic, and external risks, as depicted in Figure 3,

underscores the need for integrated risk management strategies. Manufacturers must prioritize agility and adaptability, leveraging predictive analytics and scenario planning to anticipate disruptions and mitigate their impacts. By addressing these risks collectively, European manufacturing sectors can enhance resilience and maintain competitiveness in an increasingly volatile global landscape.

#### 4.2. Effectiveness of Proposed Resilience Strategies

The analysis of the proposed resilience strategies reveals varying degrees of effectiveness in mitigating risks associated with geopolitical disruptions in European manufacturing supply chains [6, 10]. As detailed in Table 2, three primary strategies – diversification, digitalization, and agile practices – demonstrate distinct strengths in enhancing supply chain resilience.

**Table 2.** Comparison of Resilience Strategies

Strategy	Effectiveness Rating (High/Medium/Low)	Key Features	Average Cost ( M )	Implementation Time (Months)	Risk Reduction (%)
Diversification	High	Multi-sourcing, regional supply bases	$15.2 \pm 1.5$	$18 \pm 2$	$65.4 \pm 3.2$
Digitalization	Medium	Real-time monitoring, predictive analytics	$22.8 \pm 2.0$	$24 \pm 3$	$45.2 \pm 2.8$
Agile Practices	High	Flexible production systems, rapid response mechanism	$12.5 \pm 1.0$	$12 \pm 1$	$58.7 \pm 2.5$

Diversification emerges as a highly effective strategy, characterized by multi-sourcing and the establishment of regional supply bases. This approach reduces dependency on single suppliers or geographically concentrated regions, thereby mitigating the impact of localized disruptions. The high effectiveness of diversification, as indicated in Table 2, stems from its ability to distribute risk across a broader network of suppliers and regions. By fostering redundancy and flexibility, diversification ensures continuity in supply chain operations even under adverse geopolitical conditions.

Digitalization, while moderately effective, plays a crucial role in enabling real-time monitoring and predictive analytics [12]. These capabilities enhance visibility across the supply chain, allowing firms to anticipate and respond to potential disruptions proactively. Although its effectiveness is rated as medium in Table 2, digitalization serves as a foundational enabler for other strategies, such as agile practices, by providing the data and insights necessary for informed decision-making. However, the medium rating reflects challenges such as the high initial investment costs and the need for advanced technical expertise, which may limit its immediate impact for some firms.

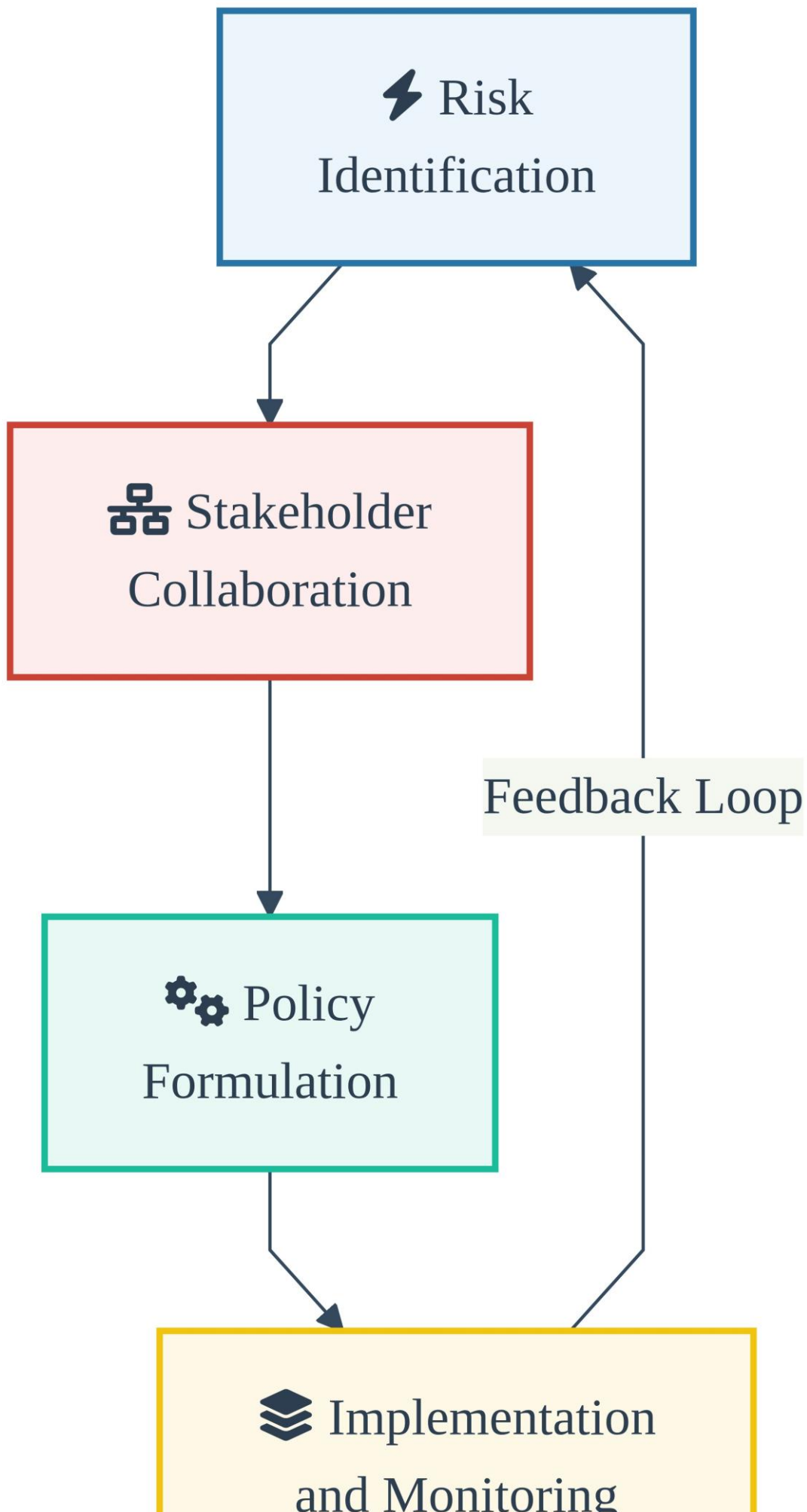
Agile practices, which focus on flexible production systems and rapid response mechanisms, are also rated as highly effective in Table 2. These practices enable manufacturers to adapt quickly to changing circumstances, such as shifts in demand or supply constraints, thereby minimizing downtime and maintaining operational continuity. The high effectiveness of agility is particularly evident in scenarios requiring swift reconfiguration of production lines or the rapid sourcing of alternative inputs. By prioritizing speed and adaptability, agile practices complement diversification and digitalization, creating a synergistic framework for resilience [8].

In summary, the comparative analysis in Table 2 underscores the critical role of diversification and agile practices as highly effective strategies, with digitalization serving as a vital enabler despite its medium-rated standalone effectiveness. Together, these strategies form a comprehensive approach to mitigating the multifaceted risks posed by geopolitical disruptions, ensuring that European manufacturing sectors remain robust and adaptive in an increasingly volatile global landscape [8].

## **5. Discussion**

### *5.1. Implications for Policy and Practice*

The findings underscore critical implications for both policymakers and industry practitioners in the European manufacturing sectors, particularly in the context of mitigating risks posed by geopolitical disruptions. A central theme emerging from the analysis is the necessity of fostering collaborative frameworks that integrate diverse stakeholders across the supply chain. As illustrated in Figure 4, the policy-making process begins with comprehensive risk identification, which serves as the foundation for subsequent actions. Policymakers must prioritize the development of robust mechanisms to systematically identify vulnerabilities within supply chains, leveraging data analytics and scenario planning to anticipate potential disruptions.



**Figure 4.** Policy Logic Flowchart for Enhancing Resilience

Stakeholder collaboration, as highlighted in the second stage of the flowchart, is pivotal in translating risk assessments into actionable strategies. This step necessitates the active involvement of industry actors, governmental bodies, and international partners to ensure that policies are both contextually relevant and operationally feasible. For instance, public-private partnerships could be instrumental in pooling resources and expertise to enhance supply chain visibility and resilience. The collaborative approach also facilitates the alignment of national policies with broader regional objectives, thereby reducing fragmentation and promoting cohesion within the European manufacturing ecosystem.

The subsequent stages of policy formulation and implementation, as depicted in Figure 4, emphasize the importance of designing adaptive and proactive measures. Policymakers should focus on creating flexible regulatory frameworks that allow industries to respond dynamically to evolving geopolitical challenges [4, 9]. Simultaneously, practitioners must adopt risk management practices that prioritize diversification of suppliers, nearshoring strategies, and investment in digital infrastructure to enhance supply chain agility. The feedback loop connecting the monitoring phase back to risk identification underscores the necessity of continuous improvement. Regular evaluation of policy outcomes and industry practices ensures that strategies remain effective and responsive to emerging threats.

In practice, these findings advocate for a shift from reactive to proactive risk management paradigms. By embedding resilience as a core principle in both policy and operational frameworks, European manufacturing sectors can better withstand geopolitical shocks while maintaining competitiveness in global markets.

*5.2. Limitations and Future Research Directions*

This study, while offering valuable insights into building supply chain resilience against geopolitical disruptions, is subject to several limitations that warrant further exploration. As detailed in Table 3, one key limitation lies in the generalized approach to manufacturing sectors. The analysis predominantly addresses resilience strategies at a broad, cross-sectoral level, which may overlook the unique vulnerabilities and operational dynamics of specific industries. For instance, the challenges faced by the automotive sector in securing critical raw materials differ significantly from those encountered in pharmaceutical supply chains, which are often constrained by regulatory complexities and temperature-sensitive logistics. Future research should therefore adopt a sector-specific lens, tailoring resilience frameworks to the distinct characteristics and requirements of individual industries. Such an approach would enable a more granular understanding of how geopolitical disruptions manifest across diverse manufacturing contexts.

**Table 3.** Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

<b>Limitation Category</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>	<b>Future Research Directions</b>	<b>Example Metrics/Challenges (Mock Data)</b>
Generalized Sector Approach	Broad, cross-sectoral analysis may overlook unique vulnerabilities of specific industries.	Develop sector-specific resilience frameworks tailored to distinct industry characteristics and requirements.	Automotive raw material delays: $15.3 \pm 0.5$ days; Pharma regulatory compliance time: $120 \pm 10$ days.

Technology Integration	Minimal focus on practical implementation and scalability of advanced technologies like AI and blockchain.	Investigate deployment of technologies for risk mitigation, addressing barriers like costs, interoperability, and security.	Blockchain implementation cost: $2.5 \times 10^6$ USD; AI adoption rate: 45.2% .
Digital Transformation Pace	Study does not align with the accelerating pace of digital transformation in supply chains.	Conduct interdisciplinary studies combining supply chain management, computer science, and policy analysis for holistic insights.	Cybersecurity breach rate: 0.05% ; Data interoperability success rate: 78.6% .

Another notable limitation, as highlighted in Table 3, is the minimal emphasis on the integration of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain. While the study acknowledges the potential of these tools to enhance supply chain visibility, predictive analytics, and risk mitigation, it does not delve deeply into their practical implementation or scalability. This gap is particularly significant given the accelerating pace of digital transformation within global supply chains. Future research should investigate how these technologies can be effectively deployed to address geopolitical risks, with a focus on overcoming barriers such as high implementation costs, data interoperability challenges, and cybersecurity concerns. Moreover, interdisciplinary studies that combine insights from supply chain management, computer science, and policy analysis could provide a more holistic perspective on leveraging technology for resilience [5].

In summary, while this study lays a foundational framework for understanding supply chain resilience in the face of geopolitical disruptions, its limitations underscore the need for further inquiry [12]. Sector-specific strategies and the integration of advanced technological solutions represent promising avenues for future research, offering the potential to refine and expand the resilience paradigms explored herein.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1. Summary of Key Insights

This study has provided a comprehensive analysis of strategies to enhance supply chain resilience within European manufacturing sectors, emphasizing the critical need to address vulnerabilities arising from geopolitical disruptions. By examining the multifaceted nature of geopolitical risks, such as trade restrictions, political instability, and shifting regulatory environments, the research underscores the importance of proactive and adaptive measures to safeguard operational continuity. The findings highlight that resilience is not solely a matter of reactive crisis management but requires a forward-looking approach that integrates risk anticipation, diversification, and collaboration across supply chain networks.

Key insights from this study include the identification of adaptive strategies that enable firms to mitigate the impact of geopolitical uncertainties. These strategies encompass supplier diversification to reduce dependency on high-risk regions, investment in digital technologies to enhance supply chain visibility, and fostering collaborative partnerships to build trust and shared risk management frameworks.

Additionally, the research emphasizes the value of scenario planning and stress testing as tools to prepare for potential disruptions, ensuring that organizations can respond effectively to unforeseen challenges.

The contributions of this study extend beyond theoretical frameworks, offering practical guidance for policymakers and industry leaders aiming to strengthen supply chain resilience. By reiterating the importance of adaptability and strategic foresight, the findings advocate for a paradigm shift in supply chain management—one that prioritizes resilience as a core component of competitive advantage in an increasingly volatile global landscape.

#### 6.2. Recommendations for Stakeholders

To enhance supply chain resilience against geopolitical disruptions, stakeholders in the European manufacturing sectors must adopt a multi-faceted approach that prioritizes collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement. First, fostering stronger partnerships across the supply chain is essential. Manufacturers, suppliers, and logistics providers should establish transparent communication channels and jointly develop contingency plans to mitigate risks. Collaborative frameworks, such as regional supplier networks or industry consortia, can help diversify sourcing strategies and reduce dependency on single points of failure.

Second, leveraging technological innovation is critical for building adaptive and robust supply chains. Stakeholders should invest in advanced digital tools, such as predictive analytics, blockchain for traceability, and artificial intelligence for real-time decision-making. These technologies can enhance visibility across the supply chain, enabling faster responses to disruptions and improving overall operational efficiency. Policymakers can support these efforts by incentivizing research and development initiatives and creating regulatory environments that encourage the adoption of emerging technologies.

Third, continuous improvement through scenario planning and stress testing should become a standard practice. Regularly evaluating supply chain vulnerabilities under various geopolitical scenarios can help organizations identify weaknesses and implement proactive measures. Policymakers can facilitate this process by providing access to risk assessment frameworks and fostering cross-sector knowledge sharing.

Finally, a coordinated effort between industry stakeholders and policymakers is imperative to address systemic risks. Governments should work closely with businesses to establish resilient infrastructure, streamline customs processes, and promote trade agreements that reduce geopolitical exposure. By aligning strategies and maintaining a forward-looking perspective, the European manufacturing sectors can better withstand future disruptions while maintaining competitiveness in a volatile global landscape.

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