

Call for Papers and Panels: Section “A New Age of Ambition: Geoeconomics and Geopolitical Competition in the Globalised World Economy” (endorsed by SGIR)

ECPR conference, 31 August-3 September 2021, Innsbruck

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The year 2020 has seen a series of watershed moments that will mark contemporary global history. A scramble for global resources in the immediate explosion of cases, heavy intervention from states to stave off the worst effects of Covid in global financial markets presage heightened conflict between states, that unlike traditional warfare, is waged by proxy through the override of commercial contracts by national security law, in the contentious allocation of EU recovery funds, and the China policy of the Biden administration.

These developments have brought back discussions about the role and extent of new and old geopolitical tensions. Different from classical geopolitical disputes, these conflicts are taking place in a highly interdependent world economy. Heightened discretion in the enforcement of existing rules governing the cross-border flow of capital, the elevated importance of public interest and national security as a rationale for market intervention, and outright sanctions on companies designated as security risks are just some of the instances by which states are playing ‘geoeconomic’ games.

This section aims to bring together different perspectives studying the phenomenon of geoeconomics in contemporary capitalism. Scholars have employed different terms such as the new geopolitics or geoeconomics, economic nationalism, and economic statecraft to capture this progression from classical international disputes to globalized and networked ways of coercing others and enforcing state interests. The panels in this section will scrutinize the concept of geoeconomics critically, test new ways of studying geoeconomic competition, and apply these ideas to different global phenomena. Together, they will bring together diverse strands of theory, coalescing an emerging field of study in political economy and international relations, providing conceptual and empirical substance to important discussions about the future of global political economy.

Panels and papers in this section could address, among others, the following topics:

Goeconomic competition: actors, instruments, forms

The concept of goeconomic competition resurfaced in International Studies with the advent of the US-China trade war, yet the relevance and implications go beyond this particular conflict. Contributions to this topic will address who counts as a goeconomic actor. For example, are states the only actors able to bundle the necessary resources and means to 'pull the strings' in international conflicts? Or, are large corporations able to amass such capabilities? This is significant given there are different forms of goeconomic competition from inter-state conflict to the weaponization of corporate power. These forms require theoretical and empirical scrutiny. Furthermore, contributions can explore the various instruments of goeconomic competition, from sanctions to sophisticated targeting of supply chains and financial infrastructures.

Goeconomics and geopolitics: complementary concepts?

The concept of (critical) geopolitics is a key inventory of International Relations research. Goeconomics, as a relatively new concept, urges us to think beyond classical geopolitical imaginaries in many aspects of the international sphere. The manifold ways in which globalized networks of corporate power and control can be weaponized, manipulated, and instrumentalized, challenges and at the same time complements geopolitics. Contributions will scrutinize the relation between both concepts, show their respective usefulness in empirical research, or locate their respective place in contemporary international studies.

The goeconomics of trade and investment

Trade politics, investment screening and regulatory protectionism have been at the core of international disputes in the last years. The (geo)politicization of trade and investment has often followed a logic which goes beyond classical geopolitical divisions. A goeconomic approach provides a fruitful new angle to make sense of these developments. Contributions could shed light on the escalation of trade wars, the recent tightening of investment screening and relevant cases, or the global rebuilding of protectionism from a goeconomic perspective.

Geoeconomics and state capitalism: (un)easy bedfellows?

The rise of states as global owners and investors and the increasing presence of state-owned capital (namely in the form of sovereign wealth funds and state-owned enterprises) in the global economy sparks debate about the geoeconomic and political character of this type of investment. Beyond China, states are increasingly intertwined as global corporate owners and steerers of capital, but our understanding of the motivations, forms, and consequences of this engagement is limited. Contributions to this topic will scrutinize the many ways in which states do or do not engage in geoeconomic competition via different forms of state-led investment.

The geography of the new geoeconomics

The rise of geoeconomics transforms geographical and spatial imaginaries about power and control in the global political economy. By using a network-centered approach, many geoeconomic analyses disregard the role of territoriality and the physical and social environment in which geoeconomic disputes take place. Contributions to this topic will scrutinize the different ways in which space is represented in geoeconomic analysis, how geographical analysis can improve or critique geoeconomic approaches, or how geography determines and shapes geoeconomic conflicts.

Regional geoeconomic competition around the world

Geoeconomic competition is usually not abstract, but aims at different sectoral, industrial, and regional targets. As an example, parts of Europe have recently been discussed as a new battleground for China-EU disputes around technological and political supremacy. Analyses of regional dynamics are thus indispensable in shedding light on geoeconomic disputes on the ground. Contributions to this topic will study different regional implications of geoeconomic competition, engage in cross-national or cross-regional comparison, or deliver case studies from a geoeconomic angle.

The role of geoeconomics for International Relations

As a relatively new concept, geoeconomics is not yet fully integrated into the wider research canon of International Relations (IR). Theoretically, geoeconomics is close to a complexity-centered approach in IR, which emphasizes cross-border economic ties and global networks as focal points to understand international politics. Contributions to this topic could analyze how

geoeconomics can be integrated as a wider research program into IR, how different theoretical implications are complementary/at odds with IR theory, or how geoeconomic challenges reveal assumptions of existing IR research.

We welcome two types of submissions:

- **For paper submissions:** please provide an abstract with maximum 500 words.
- **For panel submissions (3-5 papers):** please provide an abstract (max. 500 words) for each paper as well as an abstract for the whole panel (also max. 500 words).

The deadline for submissions is **10 February** 2021 midnight GMT.

Acceptance notifications will go out early April.

Information about the section: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/SectionDetails/1140>

Information about the general conference: <https://ecpr.eu/GeneralConference>

Submission information panels: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/Content?ID=915&EventID=151>

Submission information papers: <https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/Content?ID=916&EventID=151>

How to submit:

- Create an account: <https://ecpr.eu/MyEcpr/Account/Create> - or log in if you already have one
- Click on either the Panel or Paper submission link posted above
- Under either "Panel Overview" or "Paper Details", choose "S05 A New Age of Ambition: Geoeconomics and Geopolitical Competition in the Globalised World Economy" from the drop-down menu.
- Fill in the details of the Panel or Paper and click on submit

Please contact us if you have more questions (email addresses are above).

With best regards,

Milan, Adam, Imogen