

Press release  
TUM TALK IN HEILBRONN

**"Think, Understand, Manage"**

**Resilient supply chains – sustainable and digital**

Guarantee of success behind the scenes: This role has been played by supply chains for many years and decades. Invisible to the general public, finely tuned, highly complex processes, often spanning all corners of the globe, ensured the punctual and reliable delivery of goods and primary products. However, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic at the very latest has shown how sensitive these supply chains are to any kind of shock - whether it be closed borders, political unrest or crises, not to mention a simple lack of skilled personnel. Furthermore, the discontinuities along the supply chain throw light on the global distribution of labor: If semiconductors are lacking in Taiwan, production lines in Germany come to a standstill soon afterwards. And if a cargo ship is stuck in the Suez Canal, entire European production plans have to be adjusted.

This means that the future calls for greater reliability: companies want and need to strengthen the resilience of their supply chains, in other words, make them more resilient to and independent of external influences. This is turning principles that have been customary for decades on their head: For example, some industries are looking at bringing parts of their (pre)production from Asia back nearer to Europe. Others are bidding farewell to highly efficient just-in-time delivery, where parts were delivered to the minute.

All of this means that entire companies are going to have to change. This is because it is not just about pure logistics, but also about production processes, financing, and ultimately the research and development of future products. This puts the supply chain at the center of a comprehensive transformation of business. At the same time, two other mega-topics are also coming into focus: Firstly, regulatory pressure (for example, through the Supply Chain Act) is making it necessary for companies to be more detailed about sustainability along their supply chain. Secondly, an increasing level of digitalization is ensuring that these complex sequences of steps can be mapped, controlled and managed in the first place.

The quest for resilient supply chains therefore represents an interdisciplinary task. In this context, scientists can provide valuable impulses for structuring the supply chain of the future in a crisis-proof, durable, sustainable and digital manner. Numerous researchers at the TU Munich are involved in developing and testing innovative approaches in this field. They then work together with companies to bring them to the business world.

*All information also available for download at [mgt.tum.de/campuses/heilbronn/press/tumtalk](https://mgt.tum.de/campuses/heilbronn/press/tumtalk)*

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