

Resilience and Antifragility in Business Networks

Track Chairs: Andrea Sabatini (a.sabatini@staff.univpm.it), Alessandro Cinti, Satu Nätti, Saila Saraniemi, Matin Taheriruh, Carolina Belotti Pedroso-Bominaar, Milena Ratajczak-Mrozek

Background and Rationale

Once disruptions hit, are we still in the same business network landscape as before? Global crises—pandemics, geopolitical conflicts, climate emergencies, and rapid technological shifts—have revealed both the fragility and adaptability of interconnected systems (Küffner et al., 2022; Ramezani & Camarinha-Matos, 2020). These events demonstrate that volatility, uncertainty, and nonlinearity have become structural features of business environments rather than exceptions (Nikookar et al., 2021).

Within the IMP tradition, business networks are seen as dynamic and interactional systems (Håkansson & Snehota, 1995). Recent crises have reinvigorated scholarly interest in how networks withstand, adapt to, and transform through turbulence (Bondeli & Havenvid, 2022; Cinti et al., 2025; Ojansivu & Hermes, 2021; Simms et al., 2022). Understanding resilience—the capacity to recover or “bounce back”—robustness—the ability to persist under stress—and antifragility—the potential to grow and improve through adversity—has become essential for grasping how organizations maintain continuity and transformation in turbulent contexts (Munoz et al., 2022). Together, these perspectives invite us to explore how business networks both recover from disruptions and transform through them, which we discuss in the following two complementary lenses.

Resilience — Bouncing Back in Networks

Resilience often refers to the ability of systems to recover or “bounce back” after disruptions (Hillmann & Guenther, 2021; Munoz et al., 2022), while robustness reflects the capacity to persist and continue functioning under stress (Durach et al., 2015; Munoz et al., 2022). Both have enriched our understanding of how organizations maintain continuity and stability in turbulent conditions. Interdependencies, resource configurations, and interactive mechanisms shape how networks reorient after crises, while policy frameworks and digital innovations increasingly influence network resilience and preparedness (Bygballe et al., 2023; Ojansivu & Hermes, 2021). This perspective calls for further research into how business relationships, institutions, and technologies enable recovery, stability, and long-term viability across sectors and levels.

Gaining from Disorder — Antifragility and Beyond

In complex and continuously changing environments, returning to “business as usual” may be neither realistic nor desirable (Knight et al., 2020). Disruptions do not leave organizations—or their relationships—unchanged (Ojansivu & Hermes, 2021). The concept of antifragility (Taleb, 2012), offers a complementary and forward-looking lens. Antifragile systems do not merely survive shocks—they improve and evolve through them, transforming disruption into learning and innovation (Munoz et al., 2022; Ramezani & Camarinha-Matos, 2020). Viewing networks through this lens, relationships and interactions can serve as mechanisms for learning, competence development, and experimentation

(Taheriruh et al., 2025) —pathways through which organizations become stronger after (Nikookar et al., 2024).

Possible Themes and Topics

- How network and relationship perspectives can conceptualize resilience, robustness, antifragility or similar concepts like redundancy and preparedness
- Mechanisms, relational strategies, and orchestration practices through which business networks withstand disruptions, adapt, and evolve toward renewal and transformation
- Capability development, joint learning, and resource reconfiguration that turn crises into opportunities for growth and innovation
- The dual role of interdependencies as both enablers of recovery and sources of fragility in interconnected networks
- Cross-sector collaboration, policy frameworks, and institutional mechanisms supporting resilience and antifragility across public–private ecosystems
- The influence of digitalization and AI-driven practices on anticipation, preparedness, and long-term adaptability in networked contexts

This track aligns closely with the IMP 2026 conference theme “Building a Sustainable World Through Business Relationships and Networks.” It seeks to integrate resilience and antifragility perspectives—understanding how organizations and networks withstand, adapt, and even thrive through crises.

References:

- Abrahamsen, M. H., & Munksgaard, K. B. (2025). Interaction in a time of crisis: Buyer-supplier adaptation in public healthcare. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 40(2), 477–494. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-06-2024-0397>
- Bondeli, J. V., & Havenvid, M. I. (2022). Bouncing back in turbulent business environments: Exploring resilience in business networks. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 107, 383–395. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.10.022>
- Bygballe, L. E., Dubois, A., & Jahre, M. (2023). The importance of resource interaction in strategies for managing supply chain disruptions. *Journal of Business Research*, 154, 113333. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.113333>
- Cinti, A., Marcone, M. R., Sabatini, A., & Temperini, V. (2025). Enhancing supply chain resilience through the supply network approach. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 40(4), 858–876. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-02-2023-0106>
- Durach, C. F., Wieland, A., & Machuca, J. A. D. (2015). Antecedents and dimensions of supply chain robustness: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, 45(1–2), 118–137. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPDLM-05-2013-0133>
- Håkansson, H., & Snehota, I. (Eds.). (1995). *Developing relationships in business networks*. Routledge.

- Hillmann, J., & Guenther, E. (2021). Organizational Resilience: A Valuable Construct for Management Research? *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 23(1), 7–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12239>
- Knight, L., Meehan, J., Tapinos, E., Menzies, L., & Pfeiffer, A. (2020). Researching the future of purchasing and supply management: The purpose and potential of scenarios. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 26(3), 100624. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pursup.2020.100624>
- Küffner, C., Münch, C., Hähner, S., & Hartmann, E. (2022). Getting back into the swing of things: The adaptive path of purchasing and supply management in enhancing supply chain resilience. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 28(5), 100802. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pursup.2022.100802>
- Munoz, A., Billsberry, J., & Ambrosini, V. (2022). Resilience, robustness, and antifragility: Towards an appreciation of distinct organizational responses to adversity. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 24(2), 181–187. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12289>
- Nikookar, E., Stevenson, M., & Varsei, M. (2024). Building an antifragile supply chain: A capability blueprint for resilience and post-disruption growth. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 60(1), 13–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12313>
- Nikookar, E., Varsei, M., & Wieland, A. (2021). Gaining from disorder: Making the case for antifragility in purchasing and supply chain management. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 27(3), 100699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pursup.2021.100699>
- Ojansivu, I. T., & Hermes, J. (2021). Maintaining business relationships: Resilience through institutional work. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*, 36(11), 2049–2061. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-05-2019-0260>
- Ramezani, J., & Camarinha-Matos, L. M. (2020). Approaches for resilience and antifragility in collaborative business ecosystems. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 151, 119846. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2019.119846>
- Simms, C., McGowan, P., Pickernell, D., Vazquez-Brust, D., & Williams, A. (2022). Uncovering the effectual-causal resilience nexus in the era of Covid-19: A case of a food sector SME's resilience in the face of the global pandemic. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 106, 166–182. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2022.08.012>
- Taheriruh, M., Jääskeläinen, A., Loijas, K., & Harrison, D. (2025). Developing and deploying competences for innovative public procurement: A network perspective. *Journal of Purchasing and Supply Management*, 101039. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pursup.2025.101039>
- Taleb, N. N. (2012). *Antifragile: Things that gain from disorder*. Penguin UK.