

【欧州】 【Common】

Common - The impact of BRI in Europe: The EU' s Global Gateway strategy as a response to the Chinese Belt-and-Road Initiative

Andrea Antolini Former Researcher JTTRI

【概要 : Summary】

The Chinese Belt and Road initiative (BRI), formerly known as the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative, is an initiative for developing infrastructure and land and sea trade routes on the Eurasian continent but also at global level. It is considered being a win-win solution for China and the cooperating countries and many infrastructure projects can be placed under the BRI, which also supports the expansion of the Chinese global political and economic influence. However, for the cooperating countries, the BRI strategy also implies some disadvantages as it creates economic and financial dependencies towards China, which eventually could also lead to political dependencies. Some EU Member States as well as some EU' s neighbouring countries are organised in the CEEC 17+1 initiative with China and/or have signed bilateral BRI-related Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with China. Twelve out of the 17 participating CEEC countries are EU Member States and five are countries from the Western Balkans, which also have the potential and ambition to become an EU Member State in future.

In the past years, the concerns regarding the tight cooperation with China regarding infrastructure and other projects, which implicate financial dependencies from China, have risen concerns in the EU. To avoid a further

increase of Chinese financial, economic, and political influence in Europe, the EU has taken steps to reach a level playing field with China. The EU-China Connectivity Platform for coordinating infrastructure projects in the EU' s TEN-T programme and the Chinese BRI strategy should improve the communication between the EU and China. Furthermore, in 2019, the EU has introduced a Screening Regulation on Foreign Direct Investment (Regulation 2019/452) to give the EU and its Member States more control over Chinese direct investment in the EU. Recently, China' s BRI seems to be losing some momentum, as some CEE countries are increasingly disappointed about the outcome of BRI initiatives. At the same time, competing initiatives by the EU and the U.S. are on the rise. Most recently, in the state of the union speech of European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen, she explained the plan to introduce the "Global Gateway Strategy" to improve the EU' s global position in cooperation with other countries and to introduce an equally important political initiative like the Chinese BRI at global level. In contrast to the Chinese BRI, the EU underlines that it is the Global Gateway strategy' s main aim to achieve cooperation and not dependencies.

【記事 : Article】

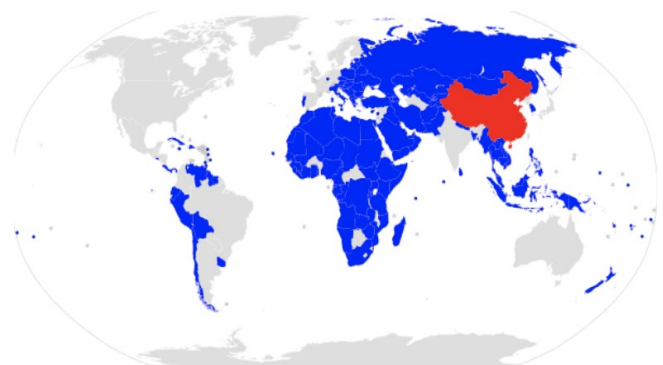
1. The Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

China's importance as a global economic player has steadily grown over the last two decades. To improve the trade and trade routes, China's president Xi Jinping announced the One Belt One Road initiative (OBOR) in 2013, and in March 2015, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was officially launched. The BRI strategy aims at promoting the connectivity by setting up infrastructures in the countries along the Belt and Road network between China, Europe, the Eurasian continent, and the African continent (Steer, Davies, Gleave, 2018). It aims at supporting China's trade, engineering and construction capabilities and its control of logistics chains for its trade. The BRI has the potential to ease bottlenecks in cross-border transportation and improve the connectivity and coordination of the development strategies of the countries along the routes. The BRI projects on the Eurasian continent comprise of six development "corridors". These corridors include, firstly, the New Eurasian Land Bridge Economic Corridor (NELBEC), which is the overland rail link between Asia and Europe. Secondly, it includes the China - Mongolia - Russia Economic Corridor (CMREC), thirdly, the China - Central Asia - West Asia Economic Corridor (CCWAEC), fourthly, the China - Indochina Peninsula Economic Corridor (CICPEC), fifthly, the Bangladesh - China - India - Myanmar - Economic Corridor (BCIMEC) and sixthly, the China - Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) (Wikipedia 2021a). Moreover, BRI includes the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, connecting China on a maritime route to Southeast Asia, Indonesia, India, the Arab peninsula, Somalia, Egypt, and Europe. In Africa, China has introduced several projects including a Chinese industrial zone in the Egypt Gulf of Suez, an electric train system for its new capital, and investments in the Western Sahara. In Kenya, in May 2014, China built the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway and in

Nigeria, the China Civil Engineering Construction Company (CCECC) built the Abuja-Kaduna railway line. Freight train services between China and Europe were initiated in March 2011 and as of 2018, the network had expanded to cover 48 Chinese cities and 42 European destinations (Wikipedia 2021a).

Finally, the BRI also includes the Polar Silk Road, supporting China's active participation in Arctic affairs. In fact, Russia has been an early partner of China, and Russia and China now have altogether 150 common projects including natural gas pipelines and the Polar Silk Road (Wikipedia 2021a). As of 23 June 2021, China had signed 206 cooperation documents with 140 countries and 32 international organisations. China's BRI includes projects on almost all continents including Africa, Europe, Eurasian countries, Asia as well as Middle and South America (Wikipedia 2021a).

Map 1: Countries which signed cooperation documents related to the Belt and Road Initiative



Source: Wikipedia (2021a)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belt_and_Road_Initiative#Projects

Regarding the BRI strategy and related projects, China has concluded Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with individual countries and individual EU Member States, rather than with EU institutions (Steer Davies Gleave 2018). The BRI-related MoUs with countries in the region of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are an important step for China to create ties and infrastructure

connections within the BRI, between the EU and Asia. Regarding EU Member States' relation with China, Poland was one of the first European countries to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with China about the BRI in 2015. In Greece, COSCO revitalized and currently runs the Port of Piraeus. Portugal signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China in 2018. In March 2019, Italy became the first G7 Nation to sign a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding relating to China's Belt and Road Initiative. In April 2019, also Austria signed a MoU with China on cooperation in the BRI project (Wikipedia 2021a). On 27 March 2019, Luxembourg signed an agreement with China to cooperate on BRI.

Considering the challenges of climate change, during the 2nd Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (in April 2019), the Belt and Road Initiative International Green Development Coalition (BRIGC) was launched in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In September 2021, China's President Xi Jinping announced that China would "step up support" for developing countries to adopt "green and low-carbon energy" and would no longer invest into overseas coal-fired power plants (Gunia 2021).

2. The CEEC 17+1 initiative and the BRI-related MoUs

The potential effects of the BRI on bilateral trade between China and the EU could include changes in transport time and trade costs and could increase trade for all countries involved, according to Garcia-Herrero et. al. (2020). In 2021, China's interest in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region resulted in the creation of the 16+1 format of 16 CEE countries including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Slovenia plus China. After the joining of

Lithuania, it became the 17+1 group. 12 of the 17 countries are EU Member States and five are countries from the Western Balkans, which also have the potential to become an EU Member State in future. All the 17 countries have bilaterally signed a MoU with China. In Europe and the CEEC, China benefits from the division of the EU's core regions in the western and central part on the one hand and the peripheral regions and countries on the other hand (Szunoár 2017). The CEE countries have become more open to Chinese business opportunities, especially after the global economic and financial crisis. The non-EU Member States amongst the CEE countries were also open to Chinese cooperation because of their disappointment with the EU, as memberships are not in reach in the near future and the ties to the EU were intensifying slower-than-expected. Therefore, the CEE countries turned towards China (Szunomár 2017). China has filled in the gap regarding the need for infrastructure investment in this region and invested in constructing new as well as upgrading existing roads, railway lines, ports, airports, electrical grid networks and other infrastructure.

However, in particular those countries in the CEEC 17+1, which are also EU Member States, are creating a problem within the EU. While the MoUs between these EU Member States and China express only a common intention without legal commitment, the BRI related projects create financial and debt dependencies. The public debt levels of BRI countries vary, but there is a general concern that a precarious debt situation could potentially lead to the transfer of the infrastructure's ownership rights to China (Mardell 2020). This can indirectly lead to the creation of political dependence from China.

As ECA (2020) points out, the MoUs between EU Member States and China make it difficult for the EU and its Member States to have a coordinated political and economic response towards China. This weakens the EU's political and economic

position towards China. Therefore, the bilateral MoUs with EU Member States could be used by Chinese government in the classic “divide et impera” political approach, which could potentially undermine the EU’s unity (ECA 2020).

3. Rising criticism against BRI

After a largely positive initial reception of the BRI and the 17+1 format, some governments seem now to start to realise the disadvantages of both initiatives. BRI could weaken a country’s strategic national infrastructure ownership, which could eventually lead to geopolitical implications and political dependencies, or to a complete control of the logistics chain of trade between the countries and China (Smith 2018).

China still benefits from divisions that prevent the EU from forming a unified front against it. In particular EU members Hungary and Poland, but also the Western Balkans and Serbia in particular have stronger ties with China. With only small hope of an EU membership in the near future, the Balkan countries are left to look to Russia and China for help, and China seems ready and willing to fill the gap (Colibasanu 2021). On the other hand, there are countries that show disappointment with the 17+1 group.

Ten years after the start of the 16+1 group, China seems to have partially failed to deliver on its economic, investment and trade promises, which had made the 17+1 mechanism appealing for the CEE in the first place. Some of the CEE countries show disappointment because of postponed or unfulfilled projects (Brînză 2021). At the same time the Russian influence in the region makes many CEE countries, which were a part of the former UdSSR dependent countries, now side with the U.S. for defence reasons. For the United States, the 17+1 mechanism is China’s tool to create a sphere of influence in Europe by using soft and hard power. Therefore, the U.S. tries to diminish China’s influence in the region by, for example, cooperation with CEE countries in the

security area, such as deployment of American troops on the eastern flank of NATO. It is directed towards Russia but also gives the US leverage in these countries’ relation towards China (Wnukowski 2019).

However, also the 17+1 group seems to lose its appeal for some CEE countries, because despite the promises and proposals of the first years, most of CEE countries failed to see consistent investment (Brînză 2021). Therefore, recently some CEE members of the 17+1 group seem to reconsider their membership in the group. In March 2021, the Lithuanian Foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis stated that the cooperation between China and Lithuania has brought “almost no benefits”. From his perspective, it was high time for the EU to move from a dividing 16+1 format to a more uniting and therefore much more efficient 27+1 (Landsbergis 2021). At the same time, it was also reported that Lithuania would open a trade representative office in Taiwan. China responded this with a warning to Lithuania of “potential consequences” and both countries recalled their ambassadors. Lithuania pulled out from the 17+1 group while other EU Member States have signalled their displeasure with the initiative, including Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, and Slovenia chose to send ministers instead of heads of state to the last 17+1 summit in February 2021 (Colibasanu 2021).

Furthermore, the U.S. tries to shape digital connectivity in Europe, by exerting pressure on the CEE states to exclude Huawei from creating 5G networks in the region. Given the close links of the CEE states with the U.S. and the latter’s intensifying rivalry with China, some China-supported projects in the region regarding digital connectivity could be undermined or limited (Wnukowski 2019). In this respect, China has underestimated the Russian background of many of the CEE countries, which makes them side with the U.S. Therefore, almost all CEE countries have

signed memoranda of understanding with the United States targeting Huawei's access to their 5G networks or joined the U.S. Clean Network initiative - a kind of containment manoeuvre aimed at Huawei and other Chinese tech companies (Brînză 2021).

Romania not only plans to restrict Chinese companies from its transport infrastructure, but also from its digital infrastructure. Romania was the first country that signed a MoU with the U.S. government to restrict companies like Huawei from building its 5G infrastructure (Brînză 2021). Even Serbia, one of China's closest co-operators amongst the CEE, accepted a clause targeting Huawei, in an MoU signed with Kosovo, suggested by the U.S. Therefore, these Central and Eastern European countries introduced restrictive for Huawei, thereby limiting China's influence. These CEE countries, like Poland, need to balance their relations towards the U.S. and China, as stronger ties with the U.S. can only be realised at the cost of weaker relations with China.

Given the distribution of interests and power, the partnership relations between China and CEE states potentially also affect the EU, as some of the 17+1 countries are EU Member States. Therefore, it will be important to have a common EU approach towards China and its investments in an EU Member State.

The U.S. administration also supports the enhancement of connectivity links in Central and Eastern Europe with the involvement of American businesses, like the "Three Seas Initiative" (TSI), which focuses on infrastructural projects in CEE, such as transport, digital technologies, and energy. The US could also play a role as a provider of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to LNG terminals in the CEE region.

In Asia in mid-2017, the U.S. joined India, as the main opponent of the BRI in the region, In the US, Australia, Europe, Japan and India, concerns about the BRI are growing, because they

realise the strategic challenges posed by the BRI and international opposition to the Chinese initiative seems to grow (Smith 2018). The U.S. and Japan have developed a counter-initiative called the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific strategy" (FOIP). Japan introduced the FOIP concept and strategy in 2016 (Wikipedia 2021b).

In May 2018, the U.S.-India Business Council and U.S.-Japan Business Council jointly launched a new private-sector initiative, the Indo-Pacific Infrastructure trilateral Forum. The Forum is designed to gather private-sector companies from the three democracies to improve coordination on infrastructure development abroad (Smith 2018).

4. The EU's strategies and foreign direct investment screening

The geopolitical position of the U.S., China, and Russia on the one hand and the CEE countries with their ties to China on the other cause the EU's concern. It not only affects the EU's position towards China, but it also could create divisions within the CEE region as, some countries are interested in intensifying the ties with the US, China, or Russia. It put pressure on the EU and its institutions to come up with a common EU policy to reduce the Chinese economic and geopolitical influence in Europe.

In 2015, the European Commission's DG MOVE and the National Development and Reform Commission of China (NDRC) established a "Connectivity Platform" to intensify coordinating the EU's and China's infrastructure policies and to strengthen cooperation, reciprocity, and transparency. The main objective of the Connectivity Platform is to explore opportunities for further cooperation in transport with a view to enhance synergies between the EU's approach to connectivity, including the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The aim is to create synergies between the TEN-T and BRI projects and to identify and prioritize the missing links

between both initiatives and infrastructure development strategies. This should clear the bottleneck sections, improve the transport capacity of key hubs, and the transport service quality.

Furthermore, the EU has also developed its own initiative regarding connectivity between Europe and Asia. On 19 September 2018, the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy adopted a Joint Communication (JOIN(2018) 31 final) that sets out the EU's vision for a new and comprehensive strategy to better connect Europe and Asia (European Commission 2018c). The EU intends to establish stronger networks and strengthen partnerships for sustainable connectivity, across all sectors and based on a respect for common rules. This is the European initiative is mainly seen as a counterbalance to the BRI. The EU intends to set up a sustainable, comprehensive, and rule-based approach for connectivity with Asia, based on three strands. Firstly, the EU intends to support the creation of transport links, energy and digital networks and human connections. Secondly, it offers connectivity partnerships to countries in Asia and organisations; and thirdly, it promotes sustainable finance through utilising diverse financial tools (European Commission 2018a).

In its direct approach towards China, the EU intends to pursue bilateral connectivity partnerships via the EU-China Connectivity Platform. At a regional level, the EU intends to contribute to enhance connectivity and integration of various regional cooperation structures, like in the Baltic and Black Seas, as well as with ASEAN and as part of the ASEM process (European Commission 2018a).

To avoid further negative economic, financial, and geo-political impacts of the BRI strategy, the EU also considered steps to establish clear rules for Chinese investment in Europe. Although there exist varying levels of restrictiveness of

foreign direct investment (FDI) within the EU, overall, the EU has a rather open foreign investment regime with only few restrictions, compared with the rest of the world. At the urging of Germany, France, and Italy, in September 2017 the EU announced it would implement a framework for investment screening that would scrutinize any foreign state-owned company's bid to buy a European part of its energy infrastructure or a defence technology firm. The Commission proposed a new legal framework to enable the EU to preserve its essential interests, including a screening of foreign direct investments by Member States on grounds of security or public order, including transparency obligations. Furthermore, a cooperation mechanism between Member States and the Commission is introduced that can be activated when a specific foreign investment in one or several Member States may affect the security or public order of another. This includes projects and programmes in the areas of research (Horizon 2020), space (Galileo), transport (Trans-European Networks for Transport, TEN-T), energy (TEN-E) and telecommunications. The new EU-level investment screening framework will ensure transparency and predictability for investors and national governments. The FDI screening regulation, "Regulation (EU) 2019/452 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union" (Regulation (EU) 2019/452), establishes an EU-wide framework in which the European Commission and the Member States can coordinate their actions on foreign investments. It became fully operational as of 11 October 2020 (European Commission 2021a).

According to the Screening Regulation, security screening is necessary in areas, including food supply, energy and raw materials, access to sensitive information such as personal data, critical infrastructure such as transport, energy, water, communication, defence, critical

technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, cybersecurity, aerospace, nano and bio technologies and the freedom and pluralism of the media. In accordance with this Regulation, Member States may maintain, amend, or adopt mechanisms to screen foreign direct investments in their territory on the grounds of security or public order. It establishes certain core requirements for EU Member States, which maintain or adopt a screening mechanism at national level on the grounds of security or public order. The EU Member States have also agreed to cooperate informally on FDI screening where a foreign investment could have an effect on the EU single market, based on guidance by the European Commission of 25 March 2020 (C(2020) 1981 final) (European Commission 2020a). The Screening Regulation for FDI (Regulation (EU) 2019/452) will allow the Commission and Member States to trace the pan-EU investment strategy of foreign investors.

5. The EU' s Global Gateway Strategy

Although BRI positively promotes the improvement of China' s connectivity with Europe and other parts of the world, it is also considered being a means to support the Chinese global economic expansion and to increase its geopolitical influence. The EU intends to counterbalance this with a new connectivity strategy called “Global Gateway” partnership as European response to the Chinese BRI initiative.

In her state of the Union speech, European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen presented the EU' s new connectivity strategy called “Global Gateway” partnership and announced that the Commission would soon present the details of the partnership (European Commission 2021b). In the speech, von der Leyen argued the EU had to invest more strategically. However, in contrast to BRI, the EU intends to build links rather than dependencies (European Commission 2021b). The EU has launched its “alternative” to China' s Belt and Road for the

EU as “a trusted brand around the world” , built as partnerships to support “investments in quality infrastructure, connecting goods, people and services around the world.” (European Commission 2021b). However, the EU' s alternative partnership “Global Gateway,” although an overdue and welcome response to BRI, should be coordinated with the G7' s “Build Back Better World” (B3W) plan to offer a leverage against and a meaningful future alternative to the Chinese BRI (Hillman/Sacks 2021).

In May 2021, the European Parliament had voted against ratifying the Comprehensive Agreement on Investment with China, citing Beijing' s sanctions on European parliamentarians and scholars and its human rights abuses (European Parliament 2021). In addition, China is increasing its focus on the Digital Silk Road (DSR) and is promoting Huawei fifth generation (5G) network technology across the globe. However, Europe has not taken a unified position on Huawei, with EU Member States Austria, Hungary and Ireland being undecided whether to exclude using Huawei 5G equipment (Sacks 2021). The EU' s new strategy Global Gateway could reflect a growing recognition within the EU of the need to promote an alternative to Huawei and to offer a meaningful alternative to BRI. The establishment of a Global Gateway Business Advisory Council should be a practical next step (Bütikofer 2021). Furthermore, the Global Gateway initiative needs an effective governance structure, an inclusive Team Europe approach, and the timely identification of lighthouse projects (Bütikofer 2021). If partners from Japan, India and the U.S. are willing to cooperate with the EU' s strategy, it could offer an opportunity to create an alternative to the Chinese BRI. To maximize its impact, Global Gateway should focus on digital infrastructure, to avoid a potential locking of European countries into Chinese technological ecosystems. The EU' s

introduction of Global Gateway reflects its growing concern with China's more assertive foreign policy and BRI's inroads into Europe. The U.S. will need to ensure that Build Back Better World (B3W) and Global Gateway do work in a complementary way and offer an alternative to the Chinese BRI.

6. Conclusion

In Europe, in particular the Chinese investments into infrastructure projects within the 17+1 group but also in some EU Member States are observed with increasing concern as this could create financial, and also political dependencies from China. It could use the countries' financial dependency as political leverage for its own geopolitical targets.

In the future, the EU will have to take account of potential security considerations when assessing economic cooperation with China, also regarding Chinese direct investment in the EU and neighbouring countries. The Regulation (EU) 2019/452 is expected to enable the EU institutions to screen foreign direct investments into the EU. All Member States, individually and within cooperation frameworks such as the 17+1 format have a responsibility to ensure consistency with EU law (JOIN/2019/5 final).

By introducing of the new connectivity strategy Global Gateway, the EU is recognizing the need to establish its own position as a global player for building closer ties with other nations in Eurasia and beyond. The EU's introduction of Global Gateway reflects its concerns with China's foreign policy and BRI's geopolitical impact on European countries. It reflects the EU's need to counterbalance Chinese activities. However, it is still unclear, how Global Gateway will compete with BRI, as so far there exists just the basic plan, but no institutional structure or budget, yet. It is unclear what resources it will have at its disposal, and how it will coordinate with other initiatives to

respond to BRI. It remains to be seen if the Global Gateway partnership will fulfil its pledge to create links rather than dependencies, and to establish an alternative to BRI at a global level.

References

- Brinză, Andreea (2021): How China's 17+1 Became a Zombie Mechanism. In: <https://thediplomat.com/2021/02/how-chinas-171-became-a-zombie-mechanism/>, February 10, 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021
- Bütikofer, Reinhard (2021): Global Gateway initiative/Von der Leyen's SOTEU speech. In: <https://reinhardbuetikofer.eu/2021/09/15/global-gateway-initiative-von-der-leyens-soteu-speech/>, 15. September 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021
- China-EU Connectivity Platform 2019 Annual Action Plan. In: <https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/eu-china-connectivity-platform-2019-action-plan.pdf>, retrieved 1 October 2021
- Colibasanu, Antonia (2021): Hungary, Poland, Serbia: China's backdoors to Europe. In: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/china/opinion/hungary-poland-serbia-chinas-backdoors-to-europe/>, 1 Sep 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021
- Devonshire-Ellis, Chris: The EU's Global Gateway: A Belt & Road Alternative? In: <https://www.silkroadbriefing.com/news/2021/09/22/the-eus-global-gateway-and-why-ursula-von-der-leyen-is-wrong-about-chinese-infrastructure-builds/>, Sep 22, 2021, retrieved 4 October 2021
- European Commission (2018a): EU steps up its strategy for connecting Europe and Asia. In: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_18_5803, 19 September 2018, retrieved 4 October 2021
- European Commission (2018b): Connecting Europe and Asia: Building blocks for an EU Strategy. In: https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/50708/connecting-europe-and-asia-building-blocks-eu-strategy_en, retrieved 6 October 2021

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, HIGH REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY (2018c): JOINT COMMUNICATION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK. Connecting Europe and Asia - Building blocks for an EU Strategy. JOIN(2018) 31 final. In: https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint_communication_-_connecting_europe_and_asia_-_building_blocks_for_an_eu_strategy_2018-09-19.pdf, 19.9.2018, retrieved 6 October 2021

European Commission (2020a): EU foreign investment screening mechanism becomes fully operational. In: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_20_1867, 9 October 2020, retrieved 4 October 2021

European Commission (2020b): COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
Guidance to the Member States concerning foreign direct investment and free movement of capital from third countries, and the protection of Europe's strategic assets, ahead of the application of Regulation (EU) 2019/452 (FDI). Screening Regulation. C(2020) 1981 final. In: https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2020/march/tradoc_158676.pdf, 25.3.2020, retrieved 4 October 2021

European Commission (2021a): Screening of foreign direct investment. In: <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2006>, 23 Jun 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021

European Commission: Coronavirus: Commission issues guidelines to protect critical European assets and technology in current crisis. In: <https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=2124>, 25 March 2020, retrieved 1 October 2021

European Commission: State of the Union 2017 - Trade Package: European Commission proposes framework for screening of foreign direct investments. In: <http://europa.eu/rapid/press->

[release_IP-17-3183_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-3183_en.htm), 14 September 2017, retrieved 1 October 2021

European Commission (2021b): 2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen. In: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/ov/SPEECH_21_4701, 15 September 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021

European Parliament (2021): MEPs refuse any agreement with China whilst sanctions are in place. In: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210517IPRO4123/meps-refuse-any-agreement-with-china-whilst-sanctions-are-in-place>, 20-05-2021

European Court of Auditors (ECA 2020): The EU's response to China's state-driven investment strategy. Review NO. 03. In: https://www.eca.europa.eu/Lists/ECADocuments/RW20_03/RW_EU_response_to_China_EN.pdf, 2020, retrieved 1 October 2021

GARCIA-HERRERO, Alicia/ WOLFF, Guntram/ XU, Jianwei/ POITIERS, Nicolas/ FELBERMAYR, Gabriel/LANGHAMMER, Rolf/LIU, Wan-Hsin/SANDKAMP, Alexander: EU-China trade and investment relations in challenging times. In: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/603492/EXPO_STU\(2020\)603492_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2020/603492/EXPO_STU(2020)603492_EN.pdf), May 2020, retrieved 1 October 2021

Gunia, Ami (2021): Why China's Promise to Stop Funding Coal Plants Around the World Is a Really Big Deal. In: <https://time.com/6100439/china-stop-funding-coal-plants/>, September 22, 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021

Hillman, Jennifer/Sacks, David (2021): The plan to 'Build Back Better' across the globe isn't enough to counter China. In: <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/558530-the-plan-to-build-back-better-across-the-globe-isnt-enough-to-counter>, 15 June 2021

Landsbergis, Gabrielius (2021): Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis said the cooperation programme between Beijing and Eastern Europe has brought Lithuania "almost no benefits". In: <https://twitter.com/lrtenglish/status/1366799210>

[075492352](#)), 2 March 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021

Mardell, Jacob (2020): China's Economic Footprint in the Western Balkans. In: <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/our-projects/germany-and-asia/news/asia-policy-brief-chinas-economic-footprint-in-the-western-balkans> 17 November 2020, retrieved 1 October 2021

Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing a framework for screening of foreign direct investments into the European Union. In: [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM\(2017\)487&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM(2017)487&lang=en), COM(2017)487 COM(2017)487, retrieved 4 October 2021

Regulation (EU) 2019/452 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union. In: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/452/oj>, 21.3.2019, retrieved 4 October 2021

Sacks, David (2021): Europe's Global Gateway Plans To Counter China, But Questions Remain. In: <https://www.cfr.org/blog/europes-global-gateway-plans-counter-china-questions-remain>, September 21, 2021, retrieved 1 October 2021

Smith, Jeff M. (2018): China's Belt and Road Initiative: Strategic Implications and International Opposition. In: The Heritage Foundation: Backgrounder. No. 3331, https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/BG3331_2.pdf, August 9, 2018, retrieved 1 October 2021

Steer Davies Gleave (2018), Research for TRAN Committee: The new Silk Route - opportunities and challenges for EU transport, European Parliament, Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels. In: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU\(2018\)585907_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/585907/IPOL_STU(2018)585907_EN.pdf), retrieved 1 October 2021

Szunomár, Ágnes (2017): Cooperation between China and Central and Eastern Europe: Promising Start,

Doubtful Outlook. In: <https://www.chinausfocus.com/finance-economy/cooperation-between-china-and-central-and-eastern-europe-promising-start-doubtful-outlook>, Dec 06, 2017, retrieved 1 October 2021

Wikipedia (2021a): List of projects of the Belt and Road Initiative. In: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_projects_of_the_Belt_and_Road_Initiative, retrieved 1 October 2021

Wikipedia (2021b): Free and Open Indo-Pacific. In: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_and_Open_Indo-Pacific, retrieved 1 October 2021

Wnukowski, Damian: Central and Eastern Europe in the Belt and Road Initiative and Other EU-Asia Connectivity Strategies. In: https://www.kas.de/documents/288143/10822438/Panorama_2019_02_4c_v5d_DamianWnukowski.pdf/9cf6c9ef-8432-ed32-e0b8-36a7ddd6b863?t=1606102326086, 2019, retrieved 1 October 2021