

FEBRUARY 15, 2024

The ICES Bulletin

- Bringing you the latest insights on China-Europe relations -

Dear ICES friends...

We are delighted to present you the latest issue of our bi-monthly Newsletter. We warmly invite you to take a look at our takeaway, the events we participated on, and this month's recommendations.

- Editor's Note -

Few relations are as crucial and valuable as the ones, past present and future, connecting Europe with China. At the ICES, we believe regular knowledge-sharing can be the bedrock that empowers mutually beneficial partnerships and the foundation for fruitful collaborations. In this biweekly newsletter, we identify and highlight the latest ideas and developments in a variety of fields, in view of improving cross-continental communication and understanding.

The ICES' Takeaway from this edition:

In recent talks and meetings, a consistent theme has been present: actors agree to disagree. This sentiment appears to have become the prevailing attitude in discussions aimed at advancing trade agreements, such as the EU-Mercosur deal, or addressing issues concerning specific regions, notably the Middle East. A similar sentiment permeates discussions regarding the bloc's relationship with China. Against the backdrop of impending European and US elections, the revision of the EU economic security strategy, concerns from businesses about potential retaliation, and divergent stances towards China and the US, EU member states are grappling with the challenge of forging a new strategic vision.

NEWS ROUND:



EU and US Working for a Minerals Security Partnership

It was reported that seeking to counter China's control of the supply chain for critical minerals, Brussels and Washington seem to be moving towards a new initiative known as the "minerals security partnership forum". The strategy would combine the EU's high-level policy approach with the US focus on specific projects and includes working with resource-rich nations. An agreement is expected to be reached by the end of February for its official launch in March.



EU Struggles with Solar Industry in Crisis

Amidst the implementation of the EU's green strategy, a flood of Chinese solar panel imports is driving record solar energy installations, crushing Europe's few local solar manufacturers, and further dividing governments, industry and policymakers over how to respond. The solar sector has warned on the need for governments to step in, but caution remains on the implementation of trade restrictions.

EU-CHINA RELATIONS

EU-ASEAN Meeting & EU-Indo-Pacific Forum

In the outcome of the EU Indo-Pacific Forum and the EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, special emphasis was placed on the situation in the South China Sea, the former attached the issue with the prosperity of both Europe and the Indo-Pacific, the latter spent four paragraphs on the South China Sea and maritime issues. Notably, key ministers from influential EU countries and some close allies in the Indo-Pacific were absent from both events.



Plans for Tougher China Stance to Be Challenged by Multiplicity of Issues

It was reported that difficulties are mounting for the EU in the implementation of a tougher stance over China as splits emerge on multiple issues. France and Germany remain at odds on everything from solar panels and electric vehicles to trade deals and supply chains, and Von der Leyen's de-risking project keeps finding resistance from member states.



HAINAN



Wenchang, Hainan, is Igniting a Thriving Aerospace Industry

An increasing number of "space fans" are going to Wenchang, in the Province of Hainan, to see rockets and their launches. The city's space-themed tourism is becoming increasingly popular, promoting the area as a renowned destination for aerospace coastal tourism in China and driving the transformation of the city's industrial system.

Hainan Opens-up Further with New Visa-free Entry Categories

From February on, citizens from more than fifty countries will be allowed to enter Hainan visa-free for a stay of up to 30 days for purposes such as business, visiting, family reunions, medical treatment, exhibitions, and sport competitions; work and study are not included. The reasoning behind the decision lies on providing support to the reform and opening up of the province as well as to facilitate the construction of the Free Trade Port.



Spring Festival holiday spurs duty-free consumption in Hainan

During the Spring Festival Holiday, the Haikou International Duty-Free Shopping Complex has witnessed a new wave of shopping boom. In addition to a shopping experience, the shopping complex offered several cultural and tourism activities in the context of the festival, allowing consumers to experience the festive spirit while shopping.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

For this edition, we suggest you check the following materials:

- Noah Barkin for GMF - [Watching China in Europe—February 2024](#)
- Ben McWilliams, Simone Tagliapietra, and Cecilia Trasi for Bruegel - [Smarter European Union industrial policy for solar panels](#)
- Dylan Marshall for the IIEA - [The Big Reveal? Europe's New Economic Security Strategy](#)
- Noah Barkin and Gregor Sebastian for Rhodium Group - [Tipping Point? Germany and China in an Era of Zero-Sum Competition](#)

PREVIOUS EVENTS

Over the past two weeks, the ICES has been invited to take part in the celebrations of the New Lunar Year organised by the FCCC and the BCCC. Moreover, we had the opportunity to attend a briefing, co-organized by Diplomatic World magazine, on the priorities of Turkmenistan's foreign policy for 2024 at the country's embassy in Brussels. The Ambassador emphasised in his speech that Turkmenistan's foreign policy strategy is founded on the principles of neutrality and peacefulness, aimed at the comprehensive development of equal, mutually beneficial, multifaceted cooperation with all states of the world and international organizations.

CONNECT WITH US

If you want to stay informed on our events and publications do not hesitate to visit our website and follow us on social media:

LinkedIn: [Institute for China-Europe Studies \(ICES\)](#)

Twitter: [@ICES-EU](#)

If you are interested in publishing your article on our website, email us at: info@ices-eu.org, with the Subject 'Article Submission_YourName_YourSurname'.

Thank you for being a part of our newsletter community! We appreciate your continued support and engagement. Stay tuned for more exciting updates in our upcoming editions. If you have any suggestions or feedback, we would love to hear from you.

On behalf of the ICES Team, we wish you a Happy New Lunar Year!

Please note that all news and views cited in this bulletin, if not otherwise indicated, **do not represent the position of ICES.**

Copyright © 2023 ICES, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

info@ices-eu.org