Survey on European China Policy

The survey results are available online: merics.org/merics-china-forecast-2020

Media partner: Handelsblatt
Origin of survey participants* (1)

Q: Which of the following best describes your current affiliation?

- Civil Society (incl. journalists and foundation representatives)
- Think Tank
- Policy making (EU Institution or National Government)
- Industry

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Origin of survey participants (2)

Q: Where is your organization headquartered?

- Northern Europe (Scandinavian countries): 14%
- Western Europe (incl. Austria, France and Germany): 62%
- Southern Europe (Mediterranean countries): 13%
- Central and Eastern Europe (incl. the Baltic states): 11%
The party state is expected to expand its role in the economy

Q: In your view, what will be Europe’s dominant narrative on China’s economy in 2020?

- Market liberalization and opening
- China as an innovation powerhouse
- State control over the economy
- Economic stress (e.g. rise in inequality and unemployment)
- Other (please specify)
Improving China’s financial system remains a critical task

Q: What would you expect China’s reform efforts to focus on in 2020?

- State-owned enterprise (SOEs) efficiency
- Financial system efficiency
- Greening the economy
- Private sector development
- Other (please specify)
Xi Jinping is believed to still rule over everything

Q: In your opinion, which course will China’s leadership take in 2020?

- Xi Jinping further strengthens his grip on power
- The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) reasserts collective leadership over one-man rule
- Intra-party opposition against Xi becomes publicly visible
- The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) starts preparing for leadership transition
- Other (please specify)
“One country, two systems” is the biggest leadership challenge

Q: Which of the following will be the biggest test for the CCP leadership in 2020?

- Hong Kong
- Xinjiang
- Taiwan
- Other (please specify)
The US might still succeed at spurring China to advance economic reforms

Q: “Black swans”: What development is most likely to take place over the course of 2020?

- Xi Jinping will be removed from the helm of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
- The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will close the camps in Xinjiang
- The People’s Liberation Army (PLA) will engage in a military intervention abroad
- China will put effective policies in place (e.g. to constrain subsidies and IP theft) to meet US demands for a trade deal
- Other (please specify)

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Political issues have come to the forefront of Europe-China relations

Q: EU-China relations in 2020 will most likely be strained by ...

- Restricted access to the Chinese market
- China’s human rights violations
- Beijing’s retaliation against governments and/or companies because of their political views
- Forced IP and technology transfers to China
- Other (please specify)
“Hot economics, cold politics” might become a defining feature of Europe-China relations

Q: Overall, how do you expect Europe-China relations to evolve in 2020?
European experts want to see Brussels in the lead on a unified China policy

Q: In 2020, who do you think should take the lead in promoting a unified European China policy?

- The European Commission
- France and Germany
- Another European country or group of countries (please specify)
Q: What’s the likelihood that the 27+1 summit will foster European unity?

Germany must roll up its sleeves to make Leipzig worthwhile

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Prospects of breakthrough on EU-China stated goals are uncertain

Q: In 2020, the EU and China will hail breakthrough in ...

- The signature of an EU-China investment agreement (Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, CAI)
- Visible cooperation on Paris climate goals
- Reform of the global trading system (WTO)
- No breakthrough
- Other (please specify)
Q: Amidst tensions with the US, how likely is it that deepening relations with Europe will be a priority for China in 2020?

Not quite China’s “year of Europe”, but Europe will be higher on China’s agenda
Europe’s industrial and innovation capabilities are key to get relations with China right

Q: Which area of EU policy is in most need of (re-)drafting to assert European interests vis-à-vis China?

- Human rights policy
- Trade policy
- Research & Innovation policy
- Industrial policy
- Other (please specify)
A changing geopolitical landscape could foster European unity

Q: How likely is it that the majority of European states will draw closer to the following countries (the EU) in 2020?

- The European Union: Very likely
- Russia: Somewhat likely
- China: Not likely
- The United States: Somewhat likely
Europe must avoid dependence on Chinese 5G technology

Q: What is the main challenge that China’s rise as a digital superpower poses to Europe in 2020?

- Social media disinformation campaigns
- Data protection violations
- Infrastructure dependence on Chinese 5G network technology
- Growing competition from Chinese tech companies
- Other (please specify)
Contact

MERICS | Mercator Institute for China Studies
Klosterstraße 64
10179 Berlin
Tel.: +49 30 3440 999 0
Mail: info@merics.de
www.merics.org