

# Programme

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. European Office

## China's growing presence in Central and Eastern Europe A matter of concern?

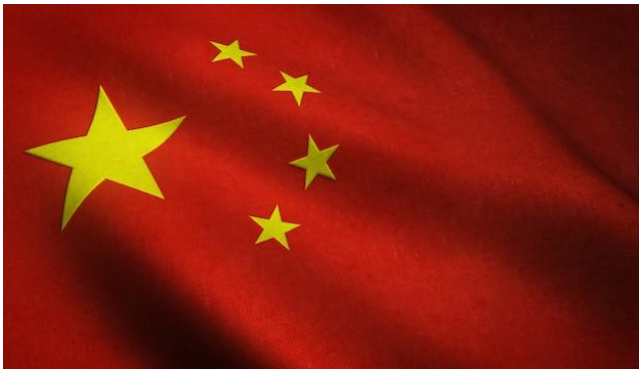
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 2023

Andrassy University Budapest, Pollack Mihály tér 3., 1088 Budapest

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### Content:

China's economic and political presence has expanded rapidly almost everywhere in the world over the past decade. In the United States, Japan, and even the European Union, attention to its impact has increased. In 2019, the European Commission and the EU diplomatic service published a document simply titled "EU-China - A Strategic Outlook." In it, China is described as a partner, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival.



The extent and intensity of Chinese activism are particularly notable in the Western Balkans and Central and Eastern Europe. China's economic and political profile expanded unusually rapidly in CEE countries before the pandemic. What do these activities look like? Do Chinese activities influence or constrain the choices and options of political and economic elites in the region? Because of its sheer size, China will inevitably play a role in the CEE: China is the world's largest trader and producer and has a substantial pool of foreign exchange reserves and capital that the CEEs understandably want to tap. China is known for using economic and political carrots and sticks to achieve widespread public relations. When China floods a country not

only with investment but also with strategic messages designed to sway public opinion, there is often little room for counterarguments, especially in countries without independent media or with weak civil societies. Moreover, civil society and academia are often too weak to provide balanced coverage of the activities of external powers as they seek to shape domestic narratives or replace them with their own. China, like other external powers (such as Russia), cultivates friendly voices in almost all countries. But in some countries, there are few counterweights.

The goal of the conference is to paint a clearer and more balanced picture of Chinese activism and messages in CEE countries and their impact on these countries and the European Union. How are CEE countries, the EU and other European actors dealing with these challenges?





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# Programme

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. European Office

Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup> 2023

16:30 - 16:45

**Welcome and Introductory remarks by**

**Zoltán Tibor Pállinger**

Rector  
Andrassy University Budapest

**Michael Winzer**

Director  
Hungarian Office  
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Budapest

16:45 - 17:30

**Opening key-note:**

**China in 2023: At its Peak?**

**Heinrich Kreft**

Chair for Diplomacy,  
Head Center for Diplomacy  
Andrassy University, Budapest

17:30 - 18:00

**Discussant:**

**Gudrun Wacker**

Senior Fellow  
Asia Program  
SWP, Berlin

18:00-18:30

Pause

18:30 -19:30

Pre-dinner-speech

**Europe and the Sino-American Rivalry**

**Hanns Maull**

Professor, University of Bologna  
Senior Fellow  
MERICS and SWP, Berlin

20:00

Dinner

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Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> 2023

09:00 - 09:30

**China a growing challenge?**

**Economic Aspects of the CEE-China relations**

**Enikő Győri**

Member of the European Parliament  
Former Ambassador, Budapest



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09:30 - 10:15	<b>China in Central and Eastern Europe – an overview</b>  <b>Heinrich Kreft</b> Chair for Diplomacy, Head Center for Diplomacy Andrassy University Budapest
10:15 – 11:00	<b>China and Russia – an ever closer cooperation?</b>  <b>Jo Inge Bekkevold</b> Senior Advisor Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies, Oslo
11:00 -11:30	<b>China-Russia cooperation from a CEE perspective</b>  <b>Martin Svarovsky</b> Member of Parliament, Prague
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee Break
12 :00 – 14 :30	<b>China in CEE – views from the region</b>
12 :00 - 12 :30	<b>16 (17) 14 +1 : China´s aproach to CEE</b> <b>Plamen Tonchev</b> Head of Asia Unit Institute of International Economic Relations (IIER), Athens
12 :30 – 13 :00	<b>China and the Western Balkans</b> <b>Stefan Vladisavljev</b> Program Coordinator Foundation BFPE for a Responsible Society, Belgrade
13.00 -13:30	<b>China and the Black Sea Region</b> <b>Andreea Brînză</b> Vice President Romanian Institute for the Study of the Asia-Pacific (RISAP), Bucharest
13:30 -14:30	Lunch Break
14 :30 – 15 :00	<b>China and the Baltic Sea Region</b> <b>Otto Tabuns</b> Director Baltic Security Foundation, Riga
15:00 - 15:30	<b>China and the Viségrad 4 countries</b> <b>Justyna Szczudlik</b> Deputy Head of Research, Head of Asia-Pacific Programme and China Analyst Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw
15:30 – 17:30	<b>Perspective from partners:</b>



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15:30 – 16:15

**China's inroads into Europe – A perspective from Berlin**

**Jörn Beißert**

Director  
China Desk  
German Foreign Office, Berlin

16:15 – 17:00

**Global Gateway Initiative– Europe's Response to China's Belt and Road Initiative**

17:00 – 17:30 (online)

**China-Europe relations – A perspective from Washington**

**Banning Garrett**

Former Director of the Asia Program  
and the Strategic Foresight Initiative,  
Atlantic Council, Washington

17:30 - 18:00

Coffee break

18:00 - 18:30 (online)

**The new China-Strategy of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group**

**Key-note**

**Jens Spahn**

Deputy Chairman CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group  
in the German Bundestag  
Former Federal Minister, Berlin

**What to make out of China's growing presence in CEE?**

18:30-19:30

**Concluding panel discussion**

**Moderation**

**Heinrich Kreft**

Chair for Diplomacy  
Head Center for Diplomacy  
Andrassy University Budapest

**Panelists**

**Jens Spahn (online)**

Deputy Chairman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group  
in the German Bundestag  
Former Federal Minister, Berlin

**Tamás Matura**

Assistant Professor & Founder  
Central and Eastern European Center for Asian Studies  
Corvinus University, Budapest

**Goran Georgiev**

Analyst  
Economic Program  
Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD), Sofia

20:00

Concluding Dinner



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Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. European Office

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### Venue:

Andrassy University Budapest  
Pollack Mihály tér 3, 1088 Budapest

*Pictures will be taken during the event. By registration participants agree that Konrad-Adenauer- Stiftung and Andrassy University can share the pictures through webpages and social media channels.*