

## China-EU Relations In The Ongoing International Security Environment

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### Abstract

Triggered by the Belt and Road Initiative and in the context of China's growing influence in the world, institutional balancing may be seen as a theory adjusted to major goals that Chinese authorities want to pursue in their new foreign policy. The 16+1 Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank are leading examples on how China is dealing with a transitional order in the making. Some EU members have decided to join Chinese multilateralism against Washington's advice, although the recent international security framework has harmed the already difficult relations between Beijing and Brussels. The major question that arises from this research is the following: To what extent do China-EU relations reflect a shifting paradigm in international security and eventually even contribute to deepening it? In fact, never before had a EU representative been so hard in criticising China. Ursula von der Leyen words on *de-coupling* versus *de-resking* in addition to EU's traditional critical posture on China's disrespect of human rights have produced a freeze on China-EU relations, a fact that Brussels strongly associates with Beijing's ambiguous stance in the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. This being said, we aim to understand not only how recent international security events impact China-EU relations, but also whether the harder EU stance on China may even further complicate international security itself in a more macro perspective.

**Keywords:** Belt & Road Initiative, China, EU, Foreign Policy, International Security