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## Navigating Digitalpolitik: Brazil's Role in China's Digital Silk Road

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### Abstract

This article explores the strategic, economic, and security dimensions of the Digital Silk Road (DSR) in Brazil, a country that, despite not being a formal member of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has increasingly aligned with its digital component. Through a qualitative methodology combining document analysis, surveys, and expert interviews, the study investigates how Brazil's participation in the DSR has evolved since 2015. It argues that the liberal view of digital cooperation—often associated with Netpolitik—is insufficient to explain the current dynamics. Instead, the article adopts a Digitalpolitik framework, emphasizing the use of digital networks as tools of power and statecraft. The paper identifies Brazil as a key partner in China's expansion of digital infrastructure in Latin America, highlighting areas such as 5G networks, artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and surveillance technologies. While the DSR presents development opportunities for Brazil's digital ecosystem, it also raises concerns over digital sovereignty, cybersecurity, and geopolitical dependency. The article concludes that Brazil must navigate a complex landscape of cooperation and caution, balancing Chinese investment with national interests and broader diplomatic alignments. The findings contribute to the broader debate on the strategic implications of China's digital influence in the Global South and the reconfiguration of global digital governance.

**Keywords:** Digital infrastructure; Belt and Road Initiative; Cybersecurity risks; Digital sovereignty; Geopolitics