

Report

China is no longer ashamed to present its political system as superior to democracy, experts said during the EU-Pacific Talks

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Over the past three decades, China has transformed from a regional outsider into a world power. However, with China's growing political and economic power, the number of states concerned about the lack of reciprocity of trade relations, dominant technological policies, foreign policy enforcement practices, and China's regional military ambitions has increased. In response to the growing influence of China, the EU, the USA and Japan are taking active steps to limit China's influence. According to experts from the Association for International Affairs, the Marshall Fund and Charles University, it is necessary to respond quickly and effectively to the challenge posed by China, as today's China no longer hides a sense of superiority and the international order is trying to adapt to its own needs and preferences. On the other hand, guests in the EU-Pacific Talks debate said that the EU Member States are now more aware of the threats coming from China, and we can expect greater cooperation between like-minded countries.

This year's first debate in a series of expert discussions on the EU's relations with the Pacific took place online on Tuesday 21 September. The guests offered their views on the current security situation and the impact the Biden administration could have on relations with China.

Ivana Karásková from the Association for International Affairs draws attention to the power of perceptions, because in some cases economic interdependence is not so profound. Especially in Central and Eastern Europe, where China uses this perception as a threat – a kind of "stick". If states believe in this apparent interdependence, it will affect their foreign policy. In general, she states that the EU expresses greater unity and resilience to the growing power of China.

Andrew Small, a senior transatlantic fellow with the Asia program at the German Marshall Fund of the United States, points out the incorrectness of the claim that the United States does not take Europe seriously enough in its Indo-Pacific policies. On the contrary, he believes that these are the areas where Europe is most important. He sees the new administration as an opportunity for much more

effective cooperation between the USA, the EU, Japan or other democratic allies.

Hosoda Takashi, an expert on Asia-Pacific from the Czech Republic's Charles University, is most concerned about the loss of French involvement in the Pacific due to the canceled purchase of French submarines by Australia. The incident caused a serious crisis in France's relations with Australia and the United States, which will replace the French in the supply of these weapons.

The experts also opened topics related to the New Silk Road project, cybersecurity, or the possibilities of climate cooperation between the EU and China. The issue of the upcoming elections in Germany, Japan and the Czech Republic was not left behind either.



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