



Wrocław University  
of Economics and Business



ASIA-PACIFIC  
RESEARCH CENTRE

# The 12th Asia-Pacific International Conference

## Towards the Indo-Pacific: new strategies and patterns of international cooperation and exchange

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Authors & Abstracts





Wroclaw University  
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## Analyzing The Impact Of Macroeconomic Factors On Asia-Pacific Renewable And Non-Renewable Energy Markets Post Covid-19

The global energy landscape has been significantly disrupted by two key factors: the economic aftermath of COVID-19 and the Ukraine-Russia crisis. These have brought about shifts in energy demand and shaken energy security, especially in the Asia-Pacific region. Amidst these changes, governments in this region are grappling with the dual challenge of ensuring energy security and achieving the carbon neutrality targets set under the Paris Agreement. This research aims to shed light on the investment behaviors in Renewable Energy (RE) and Non-Renewable Energy (NRE) markets across select Asia-Pacific nations, namely India, Japan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore. Each of these countries offers a unique socio-economic context, influencing RE market stability, and represents distinct stages of economic development. By analyzing the RE and NRE indices against macroeconomic indicators like BRENT Oil price, Gold price, FOREX rates, Development index, Income Inequality, and Coal Price, we intend to understand the complex interplay between these variables during significant financial shocks. Utilizing the Wavelet Coherence (WTC) method, the research spans January 1, 2020, to March 31, 2023. The overarching goal is to identify common energy market trends based on economic development stages and to propose versatile policy recommendations that can be adapted to suit clusters of nations rather than being nation-specific.

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## Arab Countries in the Indo-Pacific and the Global Economy

This presentation explores the role of Arab countries situated in the Indo-Pacific region within the context of the global economy. The Indo-Pacific has gained increasing significance as a pivotal area for international trade, investment, and geopolitical competition. Within this framework, Arab nations in the region play a multifaceted role, encompassing economic contributions, trade partnerships, and their unique position at the intersection of East and West. The presentation delves into the economic dynamics of these Arab nations, shedding light on their growth trajectories, economic diversification efforts, and the impact of regional and global trends on



their economic landscapes. Additionally, it examines the geopolitical significance of these countries, considering their strategic alliances, energy resources, and their role as mediators in regional conflicts. Furthermore, the presentation evaluates the challenges and opportunities faced by Arab countries in the Indo-Pacific, with a focus on enhancing their competitiveness, fostering innovation, and navigating the evolving global economic order. It also addresses the prospects for increased cooperation between these nations and other stakeholders, both regionally and internationally. In conclusion, this presentation offers a comprehensive overview of the Arab countries in the Indo-Pacific and their evolving role in the global economy, highlighting their importance as key players in a rapidly changing economic and geopolitical landscape.

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## Attractiveness of the Polish Investment Zone for Asian FDI

The article examines the five-year period (i.e. 2018-2023) of the operation of the Polish Investment Zone (PIZ), focusing on its investment attractiveness for Asian business projects. In the context of the increasing number of investments originating from Asia, especially from global corporations, the article highlights the positive outcomes of PIZ in attracting Japanese and Korean investors. The key factors for this success are the availability of attractive tax incentives and support from the public administration throughout the country. Data analysis indicates that Poland has become a preferred investment destination for many Asian companies, leading to a growth in investment over the past five years. Global corporations like LG and Daikin have chosen Poland as a strategic location, significantly enhancing the appeal of PIZ. These investments have not only benefitted the local economy but also contributed to the creation of new jobs and the transfer of technological know-how. Highly favorable tax conditions, including investment incentives and preferential tax rates offered by Polish SEZs, have played a pivotal role in attracting Asian investors. Furthermore, the availability of extensive public support across the country, encompassing infrastructure, qualified workforce, and access to European markets - these are crucial factors in the decision-making process for investing in Poland by the Asian entrepreneurs.

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## Causes of Business Crises in Europe and Asia: Case Study Analysis

Crises in the realm of business present formidable challenges for both corporate entities and the economies of entire regions. Europe and Asia, two distinct continents characterized by variations in culture, history, and economic structures, exhibit disparities in the underlying triggers and progression of business crises. The main objective of this article is to determine commonalities and distinctions observed in business crises within Asia and Europe, elucidated through the examination of select case studies. Undoubtedly, companies operating in both Asian and European landscapes may encounter issues related to mismanagement, including burdensome debt. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge that Europe and Asia exhibit unique economic, cultural, and regulatory traits, exemplified for example by the prevalence of family-controlled enterprises in Asian countries. Therefore, this article seeks to identify shared causative factors underpinning crises in both Europe and Asia, while simultaneously exploring distinct crisis factors in the realm of business across these regions. The research endeavours are underpinned by an analysis of case studies encompassing 20 companies (both European and Asian) that have grappled with severe crises. Among them, there are companies such as AirAsia Japan, which filed a petition for bankruptcy proceedings in 2020, and Spanair Airlines which went bust in 2012, just to name a few examples. In the research part, we use the comparative case study analysis method. The research undertaken is exploratory in nature; therefore, we do not formulate a thesis. A thesis will be the result of the analysis and may serve as the basis for further research.

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## Central Bank-Issued Digital Currency: Digital Yuan and the Party-State's Control over the Financial Sector

The Chinese party-state's exercise of control over the financial industry through its corresponding policies has been a subject of immense interests for many scholarly and policy researches on the country's economic transformation. As China's economic reforms enter its fifth decade, the ongoing financial inno-

vations that are taking place both inside and outside its borders could bring about far-reaching implications for the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) ability to preside over the country's increasingly dynamic and sophisticated economy. The People's Bank of China (PBOC) has announced the intention to launch the digital yuan, officially called the Digital Currency Electronic Payment (DCEP), for the public use. The inception of the DCEP raises some important questions. How would the DCEP impact China's existing economic model? How would it affect the party-state's role in the Chinese banking industry? What sorts of change would the digital yuan bring to the political economy of China, especially regarding the public-private relative distribution of economic power? This multidisciplinary study therefore combines the theoretical explanations as a result of digital currency with the contexts of the political economy that prevails in the China. Using the existing policies and evidence from the partial rollout of the DCEP, it seeks to comprehend implications for party-state's control of the financial industry as a result of DCEP policies, especially with regards to the party-state's ability to control over the Chinese financial sector. This paper argues that the evidence thus far of the DCEP seems to conform with the explanation put forward by the financial repression theory. This is most notable in the fact that the structure of the digital currency enhances the ability of the party-state to monitor, control and supervise the flow of digital yuan and forestalls the risks of influential players outside the party-state's control emerging within the economically strategic financial sector. Nonetheless, the DCEP is different from most other financially repressive policies in some important aspects including competition promotion between different players and utilisation of DCEP-related data as tool to improve effectiveness of macroeconomic policies.

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## Changing specialisation of China and India in global value chains between 1995 and 2020

The financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009 initiated a process of structural change in the global economy, which can include the weakening of production linkages and the transformations taking place in the geographical structure of value chains. These changes accelerated during the pandemic, and there are many indications that they will take on a long-term character. China is the central link in value chains in Asia, but both Chinese government policies and changes in the strategies of multinational corporations mean that its role is diminishing. On the other hand, India is gaining importance and becoming an increasingly crucial value-added supplier, both in the industrial sector and in services. The main objective of this article is to analyse the changes taking place in the specialisation of China and India in global value chains in the post-1995 period. Specific objectives may include: 1) analysing the strength of linkages in global value chains; 2) an assessment of changes in the geographic and subject structure of value-added trade; 3) assessing task specialisation; 4) identifying the main drivers of change.

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## **Comparative Advantage and the Knowledge-Based Economy. Experiences from Polish-Chinese trade**

The aim of this study was to identify trade patterns between Poland and China in the context of the theory of comparative advantage and the knowledge-based economy. The central question was to answer whether Poland has strengthened its competitive advantage in any product categories through recorded increases in normalized revealed comparative advantage (NRCA), using the modified indicator version. The approach of the above analysis enabled the conducted research to assess whether Poland's trade with China, especially those in the field of high-technology, were carried out in accordance with the theory of comparative advantage, during the analyzed decade (2013 - 2022).

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## **Competition in space - an opportunity or a threat to the global economy? - the perspective of Asia**

In the era of growing interest in space exploration by private and public entities, it seems important to attempt to assess the impact of space competition on the global economy, and in particular on Asian countries, which are key entities in the international arena. By analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, the growing share of private entities in the space sector was identified and numerous threats that may result from the growing competition were identified. These include: increasing the probability of collisions between objects in space, using space for military operations or strengthening the position of current leaders. Interest in space exploration is evidenced by, among others, the number of satellites placed in orbit, the estimated value of the space economy or even the budget of the European Space Agency, which is characterized by an increasing trend in the years 2005-2021. When attempting a holistic analysis of the direction of changes in space investments, the increased probability of collisions caused by crowding in orbits, especially low Earth orbit, should be taken into account.



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## **Contending China Diplomatic Approaches in Indo-Pacific Through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**

China's economic rise in the last decades, which followed by its military expansion, had challenged the US position and created strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific Region. The US perceived China as a serious threat due to its capability and superiority in economic, political, and military sectors. The US-China conflict has challenged regional stability, as well as disadvantages to member countries who are having good relationships with both countries. China had demonstrated a more advanced approach to gain support from the Indo-Pacific countries through the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) infrastructure projects. Through BRI project China has the ability to revise the US forces as a hegemonic power in the Indo Pacific region. The question is how these changes influence EU position in the region? The US? The developing condition in the Indo Pacific region, especially related to disputes in the South China Sea, would be tested to demonstrate China's success.

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## **Cultural differences between Poland and Asia-Pacific countries: an obstacle or facilitation?**

The presentation discusses the cultural differences between Poland and Asia-Pacific countries. It addresses the question of whether they constitute opportunities or threats for business cooperation. The research is based on the Hofstede cultural dimensions model and in-depth interviews.

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## Digital consumerism in Indonesia: A preliminary analysis

The rapid growth of Indonesia's e-commerce business has been fueled by rising consumerism and a population hungry for ease. This growth, however, poses some substantial challenges. Because of low levels of digital literacy in the general public, many people are subject to fear of missing out (FOMO), resulting in quick and potentially hazardous online transactions. Because of insufficient data protection and a general lack of awareness about personal privacy, consumers are vulnerable to identity theft and fraud. Recently, Indonesia encountered a data protection issue, which the Gen Z were ignorant of. Educators and community leaders have attempted to raise awareness of the subject of digital literacy and digital safety on a variety of occasions. However, the outcome was far from satisfying, as evidenced by numerous examples of identity theft and criminal use of online data. This study provides an in-depth examination and analysis of this issue, particularly the use of digital currency, which has grown quickly among Indonesia's Gen Z in major cities.

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## Digital Nomads in Asia

Digital nomadism mirrors the emerging trend among young individuals who embrace remote work to pursue their passions while exploring new destinations. The main research goal was to find out the determinant of the choice of Asia as a travel destination. The method of literature analysis and in-depth interviews on a sample of 10 respondents was used. The study showed that digital nomads choose to travel to Asia because of interest in culture, low taxes, natural environment and low cost of living. The research revealed that digital nomads often struggle to connect with a broader community due to misunderstandings and a lack of trust in the people they encounter while on their journeys. A typical digital nomad works in the IT, marketing or education industry, is a young person looking for adventure while travelling, and not paying much attention to housing conditions. Characteristic features are also minimalism and a reluctance to start a family.

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## **EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy and Korea's Indo-Pacific Strategy: How to increase the performance between the EU and Korea in Indo-Pacific region**

The EU and Korea have already declared their own Indo-Pacific Strategy. Both have emphasized the importance of the Indo-Pacific region amid the harsh competition between the US and China. As the EU tries to find their potential growth and competitiveness in the future, they think that the Indo-Pacific area is pivotal to their interests. Also the Korean government comes up with the Indo-Pacific strategy on December, 2022. The EU and Korea declared their own strategy later rather than the US and Japan. However, the EU and Korea have common interests in the area and therefore are still rooms for further bilateral cooperation. Among them, both have their competitiveness in the area of culture and ODA as well as critical technology. Unlike the US, the EU and Korea have to deal with China issues carefully. This is because the EU and Korea have high dependence on China's economy and natural resources. We are living in the era, "Polycrisis." The EU and Korea have to find constructive ways to enhance the bilateral relations.

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## **EU-Korea Digital Partnership: A New Era for Bilateral Partnership?**

The European Union and Korea have formed a digital partnership to boost trade, investment, and sustainable economic development. The partnership focuses on 11 core areas: 1. Joint research, 2. Semiconductors, 3. Ultra High-Performance computing and quantum technologies, 4. Cybersecurity and trust, 5. Next generation 5G and 6G, 6. Human competency, human resource exchange and digital inclusion, 7. Artificial intelligence, 8. Online and digital platform cooperation, 9. Data-related laws and systems, 10. Digital identity and trust services, and 11. Digital trade. The first digital partnership council was held in Seoul in June 2023, focusing on six prioritised areas. They are : 1. Semiconductors, 2. HPC and Quantum technology, 3. Cybersecurity and trust, 4. Beyond 5G and 6G, 5. Artificial Intelligence, and 6. Online and Digital Platform. This partnership certainly bears a huge potential for the both sides in terms of economic, political and social partnership. This partnership will also intensify and deepen the degree of cooperation further. In order to enhance cooperation, the two countries should recognise the importance of new global partnerships, focus on technological innovation, tackle common challenges, involve relevant businesses, governments, and interest groups, and establish a global impact.

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## **Ferment to preserve - spontaneously fermented food Asian vs Polish heritage**

The presentation explores the rich, diverse traditions of fermentation in Asian and Polish cuisines. Fermentation, a time-honoured technique, is pivotal in both culinary landscapes for preserving food, enhancing flavour, and promoting health. In Asian heritage, fermentation is extensively used to craft various staples such as soy sauce, kimchi, and miso, each offering a unique, complex taste profile and myriad health benefits attributed to probiotics. Concurrently, Polish cuisine boasts an array of fermented goods including sauerkraut, pickles, and traditional soured rye soup (żurek), celebrating a harmonious balance between tartness and savoriness. These iconic ferments not only underscore the preservation of food but also encapsulate the essence of cultural identity and history for both Asian and Polish communities. This presentation will elucidate the spontaneous fermentation processes, highlight the distinctive flavours and health benefits associated with these fermented foods, and delve into the significance of fermentation in safeguarding and transmitting cultural heritage. Attendees will gain insightful knowledge into the intricate tapestry of fermentation practices, underscoring the convergence and divergence in Asian and Polish fermented culinary traditions.

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## **Gender aware trade policy in the Asia-Pacific region**

How to use trade policy to advance gender equality? What are the best practices to make inclusive trade a reality? How, exactly, the new FTA's approach could contribute to women's economic empowerment? An inclusive trading system creating equal opportunities for participation in international trade regardless of gender has become one of the major issues addressed by the WTO. A sign of the increased interest in women's empowerment at the WTO is the adoption of the Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment at the Buenos Aires Ministerial Conference. It is the first multilateral initiative to increase women's participation in trade. Supporters of the declaration committed themselves, inter alia, to exchange experience and best practices on inclusive trade policies. WTO initiatives for women's economic



empowerment seem particularly relevant given the strong negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's economic situation worldwide. Further support of women's economic empowerment should be important to post-crisis economic recovery. To support women's economic empowerment some WTO members have introduced gender chapters into its FTAs. Trade agreements concluded and negotiated by Asia Pacific countries are a good example of this policy. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Chile among others, are such an example. The paper aims to answer the question: How can trade agreements contribute to gender-aware trade policy in the Asia Pacific? To answer these questions, an analysis of the trade agreements concluded and negotiated by Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Chile will be conducted.

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## **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF). Implications for supply chains**

The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is an inclusive economic initiative initiated by US President Biden in May 2022, currently involving 15 Asia-Pacific countries, i.e. the US, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Its primary goal is to increase prosperity and stability by strengthening the resilience, inclusiveness, sustainability and fairness of the region's economies. The negotiations focus on four pillars: (1) Trade; (2) Supply Chains; (3) Clean Energy, Decarbonization, and Infrastructure; and (4) Tax and Anti-Corruption. The aim of the paper is to indicate the basic assumptions and potential implications of IPEF, with particular emphasis on supply chains.

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## Insects as Food: European Perspective vs Asia-Pacific Experience

The presentation illuminates the contrasting views and applications of entomophagy (insect-eating) within the respective regions. Asia-Pacific communities have historically embraced insects as a dietary staple, recognizing their nutritional potency and environmental sustainability. Varieties like crickets, silkworms, and grasshoppers are not only entrenched in local diets but also celebrated in regional gastronomies, offering a symphony of unique flavours and textures. Conversely, European societies have been comparatively reticent, with entomophagy often met with cultural apprehension and culinary scepticism. However, the increasing urgency for sustainable food sources has kindled interest in insects as viable nutrition alternatives in Europe. Rich in proteins, vitamins, and minerals, insects are now being reconsidered for their low environmental footprint and potential role in food security. Innovative start-ups and culinary pioneers in Europe are thus working diligently to normalize insect consumption, crafting appealing products and dishes that ease the Western palate into accepting this unconventional protein source. The presentation will dissect the historical, cultural, and economic factors influencing entomophagy in both domains. It will spotlight the strides made by the Asia-Pacific in establishing insects as food and the burgeoning acceptance within Europe. Through a comparative lens, attendees will understand the motivations, challenges, and opportunities entailed in promoting insects as a nutritious and sustainable food choice, alongside the prospects of fostering global acceptance and integration of insects into diverse culinary traditions.

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## **Lesson learned from Chinese family businesses. Migrant cases from Latin America and Southeast Asia**

A balance is necessary in companies between typified and random behaviors. Governments' strategic conditions establish these behaviors, and their procedures can be learned (formal knowledge) from science-accepted practices that influence economy (transformation efficiently), law (functions, organs, and procedures), psychology (human behaviors by beliefs, habits, confrontations), social system (economic, cultural, religious or family), and politics (relation between government and governed). This research objective is to compare Hakkas Chinese families business (HCFB) experiences in Latin America (Peru) and Southeast Asia (Indonesia). The theoretical framework analyzed numerous aspects such as Chinese descendants' population communities, ethnicity, economic performance (small business and corporations), and economic community performance factors.

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## **Major Powers Struggle in the Bay of Bengal: Analysis from the Bangladeshi perspectives**

The Bay of Bengal has emerged as a focal point of geopolitical interest, witnessing a significant power struggle among major nations in the contemporary era. This research aims to provide an in-depth examination of this evolving geopolitical landscape with a specific focus on Bangladesh. The research employs a multi-faceted methodology to comprehensively analyze the major powers' struggle in the Bay of Bengal. It combines qualitative and quantitative approaches, including literature reviews, policy analysis, interviews with key stakeholders, and data-driven research. The study draws upon primary and secondary sources to create a holistic understanding of the issue. This research elucidates the intricate geopolitical dynamics at play in the Bay of Bengal, emphasizing the roles of major powers such as India, China, and the United States. It examines their strategic interests, alliances, and rivalries in the region and how these factors impact Bangladesh. The study delves into the security implica-

tions of the major powers' struggle for Bangladesh. It assesses the implications of maritime disputes, military build-ups, and power projection activities in the Bay of Bengal region on Bangladesh's national security. The study contributes to a deeper awareness and understanding of the evolving geopolitical dynamics in the Bay of Bengal among policymakers, scholars, and the general public in Bangladesh. It facilitates informed decision-making in the realm of foreign policy and national security.

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## **Measurement and assessment of the impact of logistics investments on the economic development of beneficiary countries in the aspect of international cooperation of Asian countries. Overview of methods**

Infrastructure projects of large scale and value are currently being undertaken on the Asian continent. The country which plays a significant role in investment processes is China which defines as one of its main priorities the construction of uniform international transport corridors, also called economic corridors. Specificity of the beneficiary countries of the undertaken projects, including Iraq, Iran, Pakistan: long-term armed and political conflicts, low economic development, difficult climatic and geographical conditions lead to an attempt to formulate a method for examining the impact of logistics investments on the economic development of these countries. The effects of research presented in the literature so far usually take into account the entire logistics infrastructure present in the studied area, without focusing on the effects of specific infrastructure investments, such as the construction of a highway, airport or transport facility. Another important element in this context is the participation of the foreign partner in agreeing, financing and implementing the investment. The problem formulated in this way seems to require the development of a separate, modified approach to assessing the effects of logistics investments, as well as a different approach to obtaining and selecting data on the investments undertaken, the logistics sector of the beneficiary country, and its macroeconomic indicators. The paper will be an opportunity to reflect on the methods present in the literature for assessing the effects of logistics investments, the method of collecting data and comprehensively determining infrastructure investments, as well as the benefits that this type of research can bring.



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## **Miracle on the Han River - can we still learn from Korean experience? A sustainable development perspective?**

In recent years, several crises can be seen in the global context, such as the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, or geo-political crises such as the war in Ukraine or Israel. All of these remain not insignificant for national economies. One of the countries with the most impressive history of recovering from economic crises is South Korea, which went from being a country completely destroyed after the Korean War to be the country with the most innovative economy according to the Bloomberg Index in 2021. However, is it really legitimate to call Korea's economic development a miracle? If so, who is its author and can universal conclusions be drawn?

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## **Navigating the Supply Chain Landscape: Exploring Challenges, Barriers, and Opportunities in Collaboration with Malaysia**

This presentation delves into the intricate dynamics of supply chain collaboration with Malaysia, shedding light on the challenges, barriers, and opportunities that shape this partnership. Amid the evolving economic landscape, multinational corporations and local enterprises alike face a multitude of challenges when engaging in cross-border supply chain activities with Malaysia. From regulatory complexities and varying cultural norms to logistical hurdles, the terrain demands a thorough understanding of the unique attributes of the Malaysian market. Intricacies such as customs regulations, tariffs, and documentation requirements present formidable barriers to smooth supply chain operations. However, within these challenges lie ample opportunities for growth and innovation. Malaysia's strategic geographical location, burgeoning industries, and skilled workforce offer a fertile ground for collaborations that can unlock new markets and foster economic prosperity. By fostering mutually beneficial relationships, supply chain partners can harness the potential of the Malaysian market and create value that transcends borders.

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## Participation in Global Value Chains on the Example of Asian and European Countries. A Comparative Study

The vast majority of national economies are part of global value chains, although the scale of their participation and the possibility of creating chains is diverse. Some countries (especially from Africa or Central Asia) export raw materials for further processing, others import materials for assembly and export, and others produce highly innovative goods and services (mainly European or North American countries). Moreover, some countries are highly dependent on GVCs for trade, while others mainly export domestic goods for consumption. Highly developed countries and large emerging economies actively participate in global supply chains by producing advanced and innovative products and services. Other countries, especially those in Africa, Central Asia and Latin America participate in the GVC by producing semi-finished products that require further processing in other countries.

The article aims to compare the participation in global value chains of European and Asian countries. Europe is a region with strong regional integration, which translates into four times more regional connections than global connections.

In Europe, the regional fragmentation of value chains increased primarily due to the subsequent stages of European Union enlargement, during which the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland, gradually joined the production networks of older members of the community. On the other hand, global fragmentation has also been important, driven mainly by larger European economies such as France, Germany and the UK, whose links with Asian countries such as China and India have expanded rapidly in recent years. In Asia, however, the process of expanding GVC to countries at a medium and low level of regional development is observed, and the level of advancement of connections within the chains is very high.

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## Rethinking the measurement of specialization In GVCs: functional specialisation approach

The emergence of global value chains has given rise to an ever more granular international division of labour with new opportunities for specialisation. Differences between countries are not more due

to specialisation in different products or industries, but because of specialisation in different tasks in the same industries. This paper presents a new framework of understanding the phenomenon of functional specialisation (FS), i.e. new approach to measure the country specialization in GVCs. We measure FS in two ways: using the income share of workers engaged in activities in global value chains (Timmer et al., 2019) and using activities outsourced by firms through foreign direct investment (Stoellinger, 2021). Based on data for the period 2000-2018 for EU countries, we show crucial differences between EU15 and CEE countries in their FS patterns. High value-added activities are more likely to be located in the EU15 countries, while pure manufacturing is mainly located in the CEE countries.

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## Romania's Relations with Asia-Pacific Countries in 2023

The purpose of my research has been to identify the status of Romania's diplomatic and bilateral relations with the 49 Asia-Pacific countries in 2023. Romania does not have a well-structured strategy towards Asia-Pacific countries, the diplomatic and political discourse imitates the EU and the US foreign policies. In statements, we can recognize the wordings of the US and EU strategies for Asia-Pacific: The bilateral relations with Asia-Pacific countries with Romania vary. For instance, advanced countries, such as Japan, have economic interests and significant investments in Romania, while others, such as South Korea, are not very present although Romania would like that. Where diplomatic and bilateral relations are active, this is due either to the proactive behaviour of those particular countries, such as Japan, or Pakistan, or to the touristic interest of the Romanian politicians who want to travel, such as Bali. Where economic relations are functional, this is due to the entrepreneurial, investment-prone behaviour of particular countries. There are countries where Romania opened both embassies and consulates for obvious touristic reasons, such as Bali, where the low number of Romanian expats does not justify these costs, but the desire of Romanian politicians to go to Bali does. The reluctance to develop further relations with particular countries may have practical reasons, such as potential problems. For instance, in April 2023, an unpleasant situation arose when Romania discovered that only 10% of the Bangladeshi citizens who had applied or work in Romania actually showed up at their employers.

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## Small states towards U.S. - China global contest on Pacific

I will try to explain small states (like Nauru, Fiji, Solomon Islands, etc.) stance towards U.S. China global contest on Pacific. My intention is to highlight in critical perspective, geopolitical projects, like Indo-Pacific and Belt and Road Initiative from small Pacific island countries.

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## South Korean Outward FDI Strategy in VISE4 Countries: Is It a Win-Win Approach?

Most economic growth strategies are based on trade and FDI that are two principles in the market economy. They are carried out based on comparative competitiveness and strategic investment decision respectively. South Korea made a legacy in rapid industrialization, focusing on trade and FDI in the global market. As a result, these have become the core instruments to create high economic growth in the last six decades. This strategy is still valid for the EU market since the EU-Korea FTA was concluded in 2011. In order to develop the growth strategy continuously in the EU, South Korea needs proper strategic partners such as VISE4 countries, which have complementary industrial structures and proper market accesses in the region. This paper aims to analyze South Korea and VISE4 countries' economic cooperation on a long-term basis and why it matches them strategically and practically for their win-win approach.



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## Strategic Responses From US Allies in Western Europe to the Rise of China

The rise of China not only has an increasing impact on the global distribution of power, but also on the very alliance between the United States and its European partners. It is paradoxical that, even though recent Chinese initiatives might undermine the Western structural power and the liberal international order over the long term, the main Western European allies of the United States have decided to support some of them, in spite of the critical stance of both Barack Obama and Donald Trump's presidencies. Does this mean that China's rise is opening a gap between the United States and its European allies? This paper will address this question through the analysis of the factors (economic opportunities, security concerns, and pressures exerted by the US) behind the diverging attitudes in the engagement with China of Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Spain (the 5 European allies of the United States with the highest GDP and the largest economic contribution in absolute terms to NATO) in the following case studies: the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Belt and Road Initiative and the adoption of Huawei's 5G technology. The results support the idea that security concerns are the main factor keeping US allies in Western Europe away from participating in certain Chinese initiatives, and that such concerns on both sides of the Atlantic are increasingly converging, thus reducing the risks of an alliance drift between the two sides.

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## Sustainability vs. Responsibility. Anthropological view at garment industry workers in Bangladesh

Sustainability and production have become important concepts in recent years, especially in view of the climate crisis, the effects of which we are already facing today. They are being eagerly used by manufacturers who, responding to customers' needs, describe their products as green and sustainable, made with respect for the environment and people. These descriptions are also a response to the directive introduced in March 2022 by the European Union on the circulation of materials in production, their recycling, and respect for social rights and the environment. In my presentation, I would particularly like to highlight the application of the above guidelines in the fast

fashion industry, their impact on garment production conditions in Bangladesh, as well as the social effects of the application of so-called sustainable production in Western countries. The presentation will be based on anthropological materials I acquired during research for my doctoral dissertation, in which I am studying the production of values and consumer attitudes in the fast fashion industry from a employees perspective.

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## **The EU-ROK Economic Partnership: Technological Advancements, Trade Dynamics, and Strategic Emphasis in the Post-FTA Era**

In the context of global economic connections, the partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) plays a key role in their mutual economic growth. This partnership took a significant step forward when the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was provisionally applied in July 2011. To understand the changes in trade and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) following this, foundational theories like David Ricardo's Comparative Advantage and Paul Krugman's New Trade Theory are employed. Focus is given to the automotive industry, a major area of economic exchange, and the impact of technological developments. Factors, including trade barriers, that affect trade and FDI are also examined. The research indicates a complex relationship of comparative advantages, global value chains, and strategies in the economic exchanges between the EU and ROK. The aim is to offer a solid theoretical and practical foundation for further study of this important economic relationship.

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## **The Regulatory and Operational Landscapes of Multinational Digital Platforms in Indonesia**

The presentation concentrate into the proliferation of digital platforms, which have transformed business models worldwide through the establishment of networked, transnational structures across various sectors including social media, search engines, media streaming, and online marketplaces.

It specifically examines the Indonesian landscape, a burgeoning market with over 270 million consumers and rising internet connectivity, where digital platforms are witnessing significant growth. Recognizing the economic and socio-cultural benefits of this digital expansion, the Indonesian government enforces robust regulations to maintain digital sovereignty, protect consumers, and ensure equitable contributions to the national economy from both domestic and international digital entities. Multinational companies operating in Indonesia fall into three categories: global giants from Western economies, regional platforms within Southeast Asia, and local Indonesian businesses scaling up internationally. The presentation outlines Indonesia's regulatory environment, operational prerequisites for digital platforms, and explores the dominant players in this digital domain. It provides an analysis of their market penetration, user demographics, and strategic adaptations tailored to Indonesia's unique digital ecosystem. The discourse includes a critical assessment of Indonesia's digital policies, data sovereignty, censorship issues, and the dynamic between global, regional and local digital enterprises. Finally, it underscores the need for adaptability and innovation for digital platforms to succeed in the complex and evolving Indonesian regulatory and cultural framework.

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## **The situation of Afghan refugees in Poland**

The aim of the speech is to show the situation of Afghan refugees in Poland, in particular their marginalization. This is mainly due to the migration policy pursued by Poland, which leads to the waste of the economic and social potential of the Afghan community. Afghans evacuated in August 2021 are people from the economic and social elites, holding high official and business positions in their country. In Poland, they struggle with poverty and misunderstanding, mainly due to the non-recognition of their university diplomas and loss of property due to the freezing of bank funds by the United States government.

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## **Transformation of the automotive industry in Germany and Japan towards achieving net-zero emissions in mobility**

Under the pressure of the international environment, governmental institutions, and new technological solutions developed and implemented by companies, socio-technological systems, and functions that provide, for example, mobility, are faced with the necessity of “transitioning” to new solutions enabling carbon neutrality. The consequences of this process will depend on the commitment of the entire society, especially the government and industry representatives, as well as innovative companies. This implies not merely a “transition” but a profound transformation towards “green” mobility and, consequently, deep structural changes. The course of this transformation is influenced by the specific context of each country, particularly its institutional framework, socio-economic order, macroeconomic trends, and innovation activity. Geopolitical considerations are not insignificant. A crucial aspect is the development of a long-term strategy for a socio-technological transition that considers the dynamics of interactions between institutional actions and corporate activities. We contribute to this discussion by addressing the following research questions: Where does the pressure for change in the automotive industry of the countries under study come from? What factors, whether on a national or international level, will exert the most significant impact on change? What model of transitioning to a low-carbon economy is emerging in the automotive industries of both countries? Which green technologies are considered priorities, and what are the intended outcomes of these transformations, if any? The study utilizes case studies and patent analysis and seeks to identify and compare the approaches used to achieve zero-emission mobility in both economies.



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## US-China rivalry in space and the resulting risks to China's economy

The US-China rivalry in space is an important aspect for the Chinese economy, which benefits greatly from the development of space programmes. However, this rivalry also poses a variety of challenges and threats that could affect China's stability and security. The presentation will provide an analysis of three Chinese space programmes of strategic importance to the Chinese economy in the context of the rivalry with USA. These are: the Beidou satellite navigation, which is designed to provide independence from GPS and enhance the efficiency of transport, agriculture and other sectors of the economy; the planned Guowang satellite constellation, which is intended to provide internet connectivity worldwide and increase the competitiveness of Chinese technology companies; and Moon missions, which aim to enable future utilisation of the Moon's natural resources. Possible implications for the Chinese economy related to the rivalry with the United States and its actions towards China will also be addressed.



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