

Seminar*

Seller Beware? Chinese Direct Investment and Political Challenges in the European Union

Thursday 14 November 2019

12.30-2.30 pm

Sciences Po, Room TBA

From a non-existent player fifteen years ago, China has now become one of the largest senders of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows in the world. By and large, this new provenance of capital has been welcomed by host countries, especially given the drop in other sources of FDI in the wake of the American financial crisis and Euro crisis in the late 2000s. The exponential growth of Chinese direct investment, however, has also been accompanied in some cases by controversy and even resistance, both in developing and in developed economies. In some countries of the European Union (EU), critics have expressed fears and denounced some of the potential dangers of this investment, such as lowering of local labor standards, hollowing out of industrial core through repatriation of assets, and acquisition of dual use technology. The ensuing political backlash has received considerable media attention and increased scrutiny over subsequent deals, notably through the tightening of inbound FDI screening procedures. In other EU countries, however, Chinese FDI has been received with open arms and host countries have become advocates for Chinese interests inside the EU. This talk explores the political challenges posed by the recent explosion of Chinese direct investment in the European Union. First, it considers two alternative explanations for these peculiar political challenges. Second, it explores the implications of these challenges on European unity and policies.



Speaker

Sophie Meunier, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs

Sophie Meunier is also co-Director of the EU Program at Princeton. She is the author of *Trading Voices: The European Union in International Commercial Negotiations* (Princeton University Press, 2005) and *The French Challenge: Adapting to Globalization* (Brookings Institution Press, 2001), winner of the 2002 France-America book award. She is co-editor of several books on Europe and globalization, most recently *The Politics of Interest Representation in the Global Age* (Cambridge University Press, 2014) and *Speaking with a Single Voice: The EU as an Effective Actor in Global Governance?* (Routledge, 2015). Her current work deals with the politics of Foreign Direct Investment in Europe, notably Chinese investment. She was made Chevalier des Palmes Academiques by the French Government.

Discussion

Richard Balme, Sciences Po, CEE

Compulsory registration on the link above - Contact: katia.rio@sciencespo.fr

*Key Theme: *The transformations of capitalism*