

CEIAS

Annual

Report

2023



CEIAS

Central European Institute
of Asian Studies

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Letter from CEIAS President



Alfred Gerstl
CEIAS President

Since its establishment, CEIAS has spread knowledge about Asia through many different channels and formats: from short posts on CEIAS's social media accounts and comprehensive study on the reaction of governments and societies in the Indo-Pacific region to the Russian war against Ukraine, to countless interviews by CEIAS experts in national and international media, and lectures by CEIAS experts in Slovakia and abroad. Moreover, we regularly update the existing trackers on academic engagement between China and Europe, EU-Taiwan relations, and Myanmar. We are delighted that the audience we reach through these formats is growing all the time, providing us valuable feedback.

The basis for the dissemination of knowledge to a general and expert audience is collaboration with experts in their field – experts who offer innovative and different opinions on current affairs. In 2023, we succeeded in attracting new Research Fellows and Research Assistants who

had already made important contributions to our publications. The successful expansion of our network of experts is crucial to achieving our goal of covering even more countries, regional developments, and crises in Asia and the Indo-Pacific from different disciplinary perspectives. Many CEIAS experts live in the countries they research, speak the national language, and have expert knowledge from previous visits and work experiences.

Our broad yet deep focus on Asia distinguishes CEIAS from many other think tanks that specialize in a single country or an Asian sub-region.

In addition, our expertise on Central Europe's relations with Asia remains the hallmark of our think tank. The small Central European countries have a special view of Asia and their voices deserve to be heard. CEIAS plays an important role in making these voices heard – in Europe and Asia. To better compare and highlight the specific Central European perceptions and strategies, we have expanded our expertise in recent years to include the European Union's and other European countries' relations with Asia.

CEIAS's numerous activities in 2023 demonstrate that we are on a steady growth path. However, even though it has been a very successful year in terms of research and dissemination activities, we have big ambitions for the future and expect to produce an even greater output in 2024 while maintaining our high standards.

Our success also depends on external support. Therefore, let me thank on behalf of the whole CEIAS team our many generous donors from Europe, Asia, and the US for their strong support. We also thank the public who follows us on our website, social media and who attend our events, and the members of our international advisory board for their useful feedback and recommendations. This support as well as the ever-growing number of collaborators ensure that CEIAS's steady growth is sustainable. We are looking forward to all the exciting new projects in the coming years.

About CEIAS

The Central European Institute of Asian Studies (CEIAS) is an independent think tank focusing on Europe-Asia relations and developments in the Indo-Pacific region. Originally founded in 2007 in Slovakia, CEIAS is today a transnational think tank with main branches in Bratislava (Slovakia), Prague (Czech Republic), and Vienna (Austria), and further regional presence in Poland, Hungary, Canada, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and beyond.

As the sole transnational think tank focused on Asia in Central Europe, CEIAS's main goal is to spread knowledge about contemporary Asia among experts and the public in Central Europe and beyond, while also informing international audiences about Central European and EU's relations with Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific region.

To this end, CEIAS conducts and publishes its own research, organizes seminars and conferences, supports education on Asia and Indo-Pacific-related topics, and provides expert commentary for the local, regional, and international media. CEIAS strives to combine its academic and policy advisory role, producing data-driven, methodologically rigorous, reliable, and practically relevant research that is highly valued by experts and policymakers alike.

CEIAS activities focus mainly on international relations, politics, security studies, economics, and societies in East, Southeast, South, and Central Asia.



2023 at a glance



13

events organized or co-hosted by CEIAS



19

research papers published by CEIAS analysts



67

articles written by CEIAS experts



2000+

followers on our LinkedIn page

Our talents:

Who worked with us in 2023

Board of Directors

Alfred Gerstl • President

Matej Šimalčík • Executive Director

Richard Turcsányi • Program Director

Kristína Kironská • Advocacy Director

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James Iocovozzi • Editor

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Nick Nieschalke • Research Assistant

Barbara Halač Pavlovičová • Research Assistant

Yiju Chen • Research Assistant

Kuan Chen • Research Assistant

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Thomas Chan • Research Fellow

Tinkara Godec • Research Fellow

Sebestyén Hompot • Research Fellow

Lucia Husenicová • Research Fellow

Diya Jiang • Research Fellow

Omar Rasya Joenoes • Research Fellow

Barbara Kelemen • Research Fellow

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Benjamin Toettoe • Research Fellow

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Róbert Vancel • Research Fellow

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Grigorij Mesežnikov • Institute for Public Affairs

Jagannath Panda • Stockholm Center for South Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs

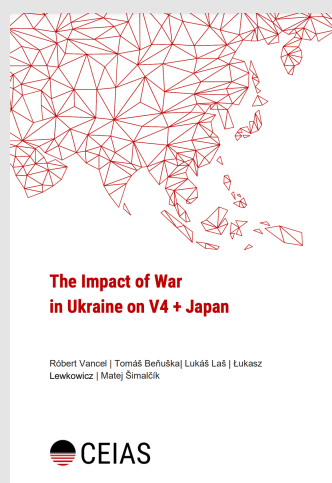
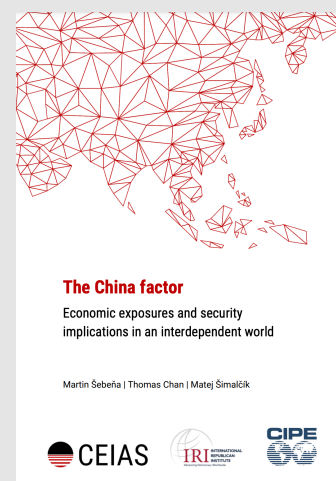
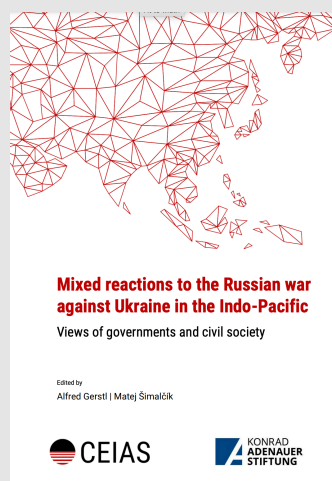
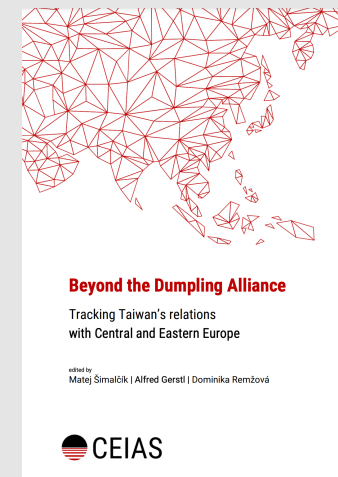
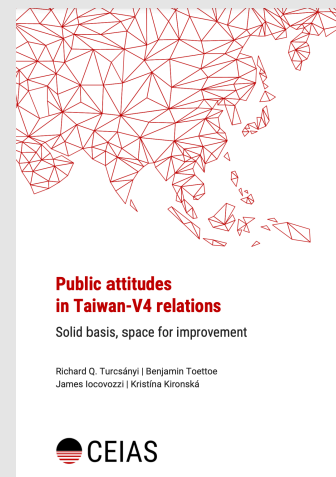
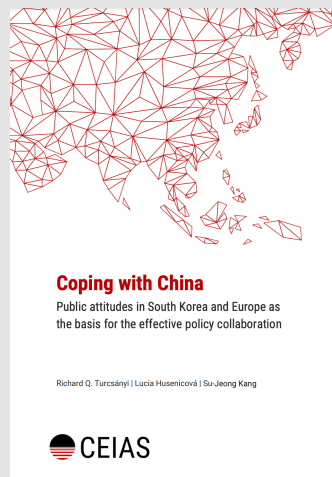
Shannon Tiezzi • The Diplomat

Depth & rigor: CEIAS Papers

CEIAS Papers continue to be a cornerstone of our activity. We strive to engage in methodologically rigorous research, while presenting the findings in accessible and easy-to-consume way. In 2023, our researchers published 19 new policy reports and research papers. Throughout the year, we had 11 in-house publications. Furthermore, CEIAS researchers contributed to eight externally published research papers, including the annual report by the European Think-tank Network on China (ETNC).

We have covered numerous angles on Asia-Europe relations. We looked into the state of EU-South Korea cooperation, thoroughly mapped Taiwan-CEE relations, engaged in robust analysis of trade dependency on China, analyzed Taiwanese elections and their impacts on foreign policy, and categorized responses of Indo-Pacific states towards Russian aggression against Ukraine.

Selection of CEIAS Papers published in 2023 (click on tile to open)



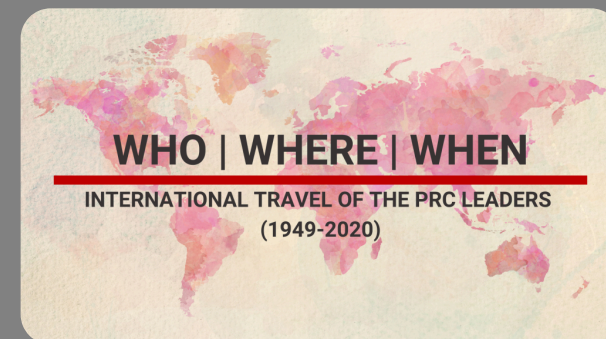
Focus on data:

CEIAS Trackers

We strive to provide rigorous, data driven analysis of current Indo-Pacific affairs and Europe-Asia relations. To this end, we have launched several CEIAS Trackers, online portals that present finding based on original robust datasets developed by our research team.

Our trackers help illuminate important topics, inform journalistic work, engage policymakers in data-driven decision-making, and facilitate further research by CEIAS and external researchers.

- **China Europe Academic Engagement Tracker** collects data on the scope of research cooperation between China and Europe.
- **EU-Taiwan Tracker** provides weekly updates on dynamic developments of relations between EU & Taiwan.
- **Myanmar Coup Tracker** is dedicated to mapping key events following the military's attempt to seize power from the civilian government.
- **Who | Where | When** records almost 600 official international trips of Chinese presidents and premiers.



Click on tile to open

Spreading knowledge: Our events in 2023

In 2023, we organized or co-hosted 13 events. This helped us to showcase our expertise to broad audiences of fellow experts, politicians, diplomats, policymakers, students, and journalists.

In February, we hosted an event with Embassy of Japan in Bratislava on rule of law in maritime conflicts, such as the tensions in the South China Sea, and why protecting free navigation is also of importance for landlocked countries in the CEE.

A month later, in March, we held a roundtable on Russian aggression of Ukraine, and how various countries and stakeholder groups from the Indo-Pacific region are responding to the war.

Our research on indirect trade exposures to China was promoted at a series of events, including a presentations to MEPs at the EU Parliament and a discussion hosted by the Lithuanian MFA.

We also organized several online events throughout the year and catered to the global interest for contextualizing current Taiwan-CEE relations.

We ended the year with series of activities in Taipei, including a seminar co-organized with the Institute of Diplomatic & International Affairs, Taiwan's diplomatic academy. We also participated in the China in the World Conference, where we discussed research security and findings of our research on the scope of China-Europe academic collaboration.



Presentation of report The China factor: Economic exposures and security implications in an interdependent world in the European Parliament (Brussels, March 2023).

CEEasia Briefing



CEEasia is a monthly newsletter by CEIAS that aims to spread knowledge about Asia-related developments in Europe, especially in the CEE region.

The CEEasia briefing is a regular gateway to news about current developments in Asia-Europe relations, including in political and security affairs, as well as trade, investment, and other aspects of economic cooperation. The bulk of our attention is dedicated to news that concerns or otherwise impacts the CEE countries and their relations with Asian partners.

In 2023, we published 12 monthly issues of the CEEasia Briefing, which were directly delivered to consumers via email or LinkedIn subscriptions.

Currently, each issue of the CEEasia Briefing is delivered to over 1000 email and over 1000 LinkedIn subscribers.

[Explore past issues here](#)

Spotlight on Formosa:

Center for CEE-Taiwan Relations

In 2022, CEIAS established the Center for CEE-Taiwan Relations, tasked with producing and disseminating expert knowledge necessary for ensuring the sustainable development of relations between Taiwan and the EU, while having a special focus on CEE countries. This move was taken in response to a newfound interest within Europe, especially in the CEE region, in engaging with Taiwan. This requires that mutual relations are underpinned by rigorous analysis and understanding of national and regional specifics.

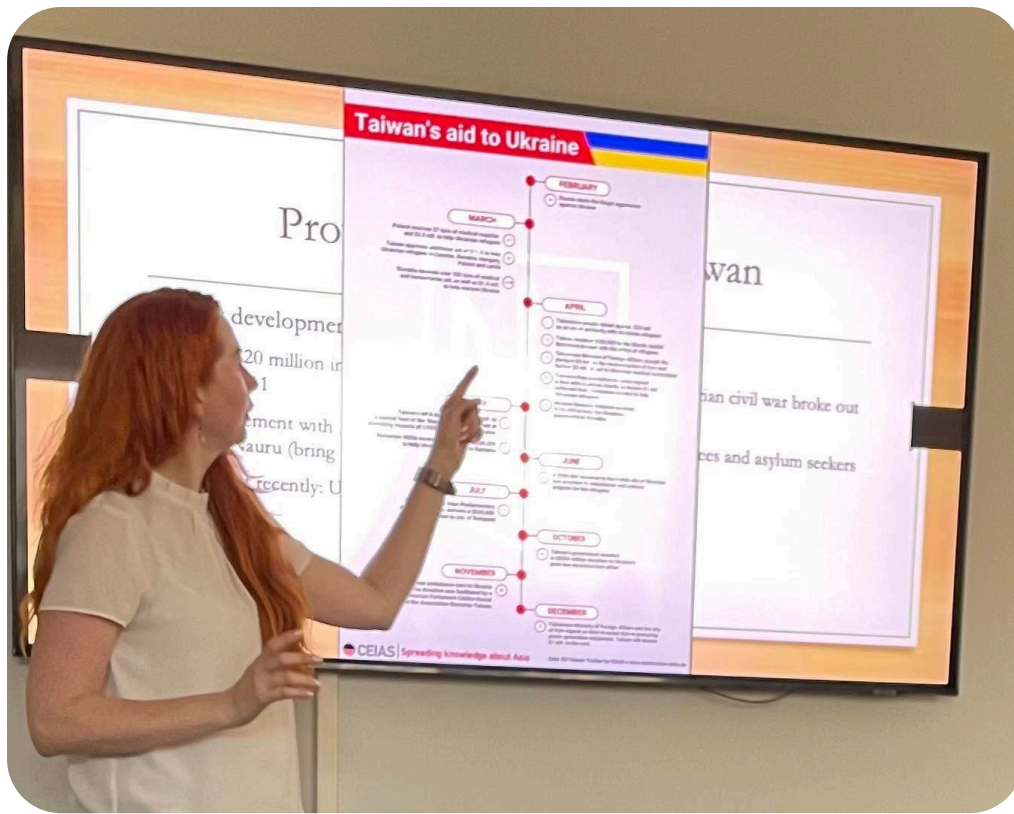
The Center's activities in 2023 were organized around three main pillars:

- conducting rigorous research on the determinants of Taiwan-EU relations, stakeholder interests, and opportunities for further collaboration,
- extensive mapping of interactions between Taiwan and EU via our flagship project, the EU-Taiwan Tracker.
- organizing of events and facilitation of mutual contacts.

In March 2023, we published two reports: *Beyond the Dumpling Alliance: Tracking Taiwan's relations with Central and Eastern Europe* and *Public attitudes in Taiwan-V4 relations: Solid basis, space for improvement*.

Towards the end of the year, we also extensively covered the run up towards Taiwanese general elections, and the potential impacts of them on the situation in the Taiwan Strait, and Taiwan's foreign policy and international position. In October we published the report *Taiwan's 2024 presidential election and its candidates: What to expect in foreign policy and cross-Strait relations?* This was supplemented by several follow-up commentaries and infographics outlining the candidates' foreign and security policy platforms.

In November, we organized a seminar hosted at the Institute of Diplomatic & International Affairs, Taiwan's diplomatic academy, on the state of Slovakia-Taiwan relations. The event was opened by Mr. Remus Li-kuo Chen, Taiwan's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.



Select CEIAS activities on Taiwan: (i) Kristína Kironská lectures on Taiwanese asylum policy at University of California Santa Barbara, (ii) Matej Šimalčík gives a presentation on indirect trade exposures to China at the Czech Hub in Taiwan, (iii) Matej Šimalčík participates in a panel on Taiwan-CEE cooperation alongside former Deputy Minister of Economy Karol Galek (SK) and Deputy Minister of Science, Research, and Innovation Jana Havlíková (CZ), (iv) CEIAS co-directors meeting with Joseph Wu, then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan at a gala dinner celebrating anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in Taipei, (v) CEIAS staff attending Slovak National Day Reception organized by Slovak Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei.



Lasting cooperation: European Think-tank Network on China

The European Think-tank Network on China (ETNC) is a gathering of China experts from a selection of European research institutes. Established in 2014, ETNC is devoted to the policy-oriented study of Chinese foreign policy and relations between China and European countries as well as China and the EU.

At CEIAS, we are proud to be a member of ETNC, representing Slovakia since 2019.

In 2023, our experts Matej Šimalčík, Richard Turcsányi, and Adam Kalivoda contributed to the yearly research report, *From a China strategy to no strategy at all: Exploring the diversity of European approaches*.

We also participated in the two meetings of the platform: in Vienna hosted by Austria Institute for European and Security Policy (April 2023) and in Stockholm at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs (October 2023).



From a China strategy to no strategy at all

Exploring the diversity
of European approaches

Edited by: Bernhard Bartsch, Claudia Wessling
Peer reviews by: Una Aleksandra Bērziņa-Čerenkova,
Lucas Erlbacher, Miguel Otero-Iglesias, John Seaman



A Report by the European
Think-tank Network on China (ETNC)
July 2023

[Read the ETNC report](#)

Planning ahead: CEEasia Forum

The 2023 was also a year of forward planning for CEIAS. We took steps aimed at organizing the CEEasia Forum conference. Our goal was to establish a regular venue in Central Europe where topics critical to global security and stability in the Euro–Atlantic and Indo–Pacific regions can be discussed among like-minded experts from both regions.

The initial idea for the event was born in 2021, when, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we held the pilot CEEasia Forum as an online conference. After a short break, we decided to revive the format and bring it to the offline world.

To this end, we formed a strategic partnership with the Slovak Foreign Policy Association, one of the premier generalist foreign policy think tanks in Central Europe.

The 2024 CEEasia Forum – which was centered around the theme “Unity Amid Disruption: Charting a Shared Path for Europe and Asia” – was successfully held in March 2024.

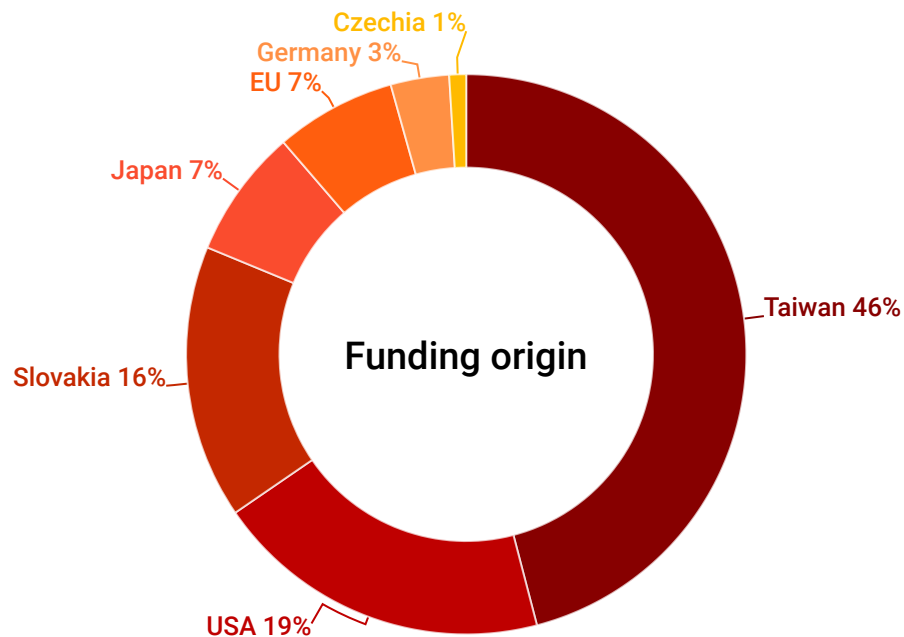
Over the course of the two-day event, we brought together over 140 participants, and expert panelists from 20 countries. Key takeaways of the conference are available on our website.



Valuable partnerships:

Who supported us in 2023

Our work and impact was made possible thanks to the support of our institutional partners. Their belief in our work, and support for it via provision of grants and donations, has allowed us to focus on delivering high quality research, inform public debates about Asia-Europe relations, and spread knowledge about Asia.



Donor	Contribution (€)
Taipei Representative Office in Bratislava	28,350.00
International Republican Institute	9,194.12
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia	8,000.00
US Embassy Bratislava	7,560.00
DoubleThink Lab	6,703.81
Embassy of Japan in Bratislava	6,400.00
European Transport Workers Federation	5,992.50
Ministry of Defense of Slovakia	5,000.00
Taiwan Foundation for Democracy	4,418.60
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung	2,000.00
Hans Seidl Stiftung	900.00
Epocha (book publisher)	834.48
Hadart Publishing (book publisher)	576.99
Total	85,930.50

In 2023 we also secured several long-term grants. While these were formally awarded in 2023, fund began to be drawn only in 2024. Thus, these grants and donations will be covered by the CEIAS Annual Report 2024.

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