



## On the Agenda

### The future of EU-China relations

28 January 2021, 14h00 – 15h00 (CET)

Zoom Webinar

#### ABOUT THE EVENT

As one of the final acts of 2020, on 30 December, the EU and China concluded in principle the negotiations for a Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI). In addition to finalising the text of this agreement, one of the most important final steps is getting the approval from the European Parliament. Those in favour of the agreement would highlight China's commitment to a greater level of market access for EU investors, and fair treatment in relation to state owned enterprises. Further pros are the ambitious provisions made by China on sustainable development, and on commitments on forced labour and ratification of key ILO conventions.

Yet several stakeholders have underlined the fact that there is no clear timeline for China to ratify these conventions, or to put an end to the use of forced labour, particularly within the Uighur Muslim community. Many also point to China's ongoing crackdown against pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong, and to the different ways in which this investment deal might poison future relations with the new Biden Presidency in the USA.

Has the EU forsaken its international role as standard bearer for the protection of human rights and environmental standards, simply to provide access to some European investors and companies to China's growing 1.4 billion consumer market? Or can this investment deal be a step towards securing small victories in terms of the ratification of the ILO conventions against forced labour, and the ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change? Should the EU have asked for more assurances from China or wait for the Biden Administration to create a common transatlantic strategy to counter China's aggressive international behaviour?



## EVENT SCHEDULE

**13h55** Participants connect to the Zoom event

**14h00** Opening Remarks

**Daniel Kaddik**, Executive Director, European Liberal Forum

**14h03** Introduction by the Moderator

**Beatriz Ríos**, EU Affairs reporter

**14h03** First intervention

**Marie-Pierre Vedrenne**, Member of the European Parliament, Renew Europe Group

**14h13** Second intervention

**Hans van Baalen**, President, ALDE Party

**14h20** Third intervention

**Andrew Small**, Associate Senior Policy Fellow, ECFR & Senior Transatlantic Fellow, Asia Programme, GMF

**14h27** Moderated debate

**14h57** Closing Remarks

**15h00** End of event

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