

## ifa ECP Monitor At a Glance

# China

## PRÉCIS

China's focus on a new global cultural policy strategy came as a result of increased anxiety regarding China's rise around the world. Western countries in particular saw China's rapid economic and political ascendance as a threat to the stability of the international system. A central goal of the new initiatives was therefore to help shape the international discourse and change the conversation in favour of China. As part of the strategy, China seeks to discredit Western ideas and institutions and promote China's economic and political model as an attractive alternative. This message is addressed both internally to the Chinese population and to people in developing countries and the West itself.

### KEY INDICATORS 2019

<b>Population</b>	Rank/number	1 <sup>st</sup> /1,398 billion
<b>GDP per capita</b>	Rank/number	2 <sup>nd</sup> / 9,164
<b>Cultural Economy</b>	As share of GDP	4.5
<b>Education economy</b>	As share of GDP	4.2
<b>R&amp;D economy</b>	As share of GDP	2.2 (2018)
<b>Media economy</b>	As share of GDP	-
<b>Geopolitical position</b>	Hard power	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Sharp power	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Soft power	27 <sup>th</sup>
	Diplomacy rank	1 <sup>st</sup>

### OVERVIEW OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY 2019

<b>Number of countries present</b>	171
<b>Number of institutions abroad</b>	~1,500
<b>FTE staff</b>	min. 85,000
<b>Freelance and local staff</b>	-
<b>Financial scale</b>	-
<b>Government support</b>	~9 billion
<b>Comparative ECP group</b>	global

---

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

---

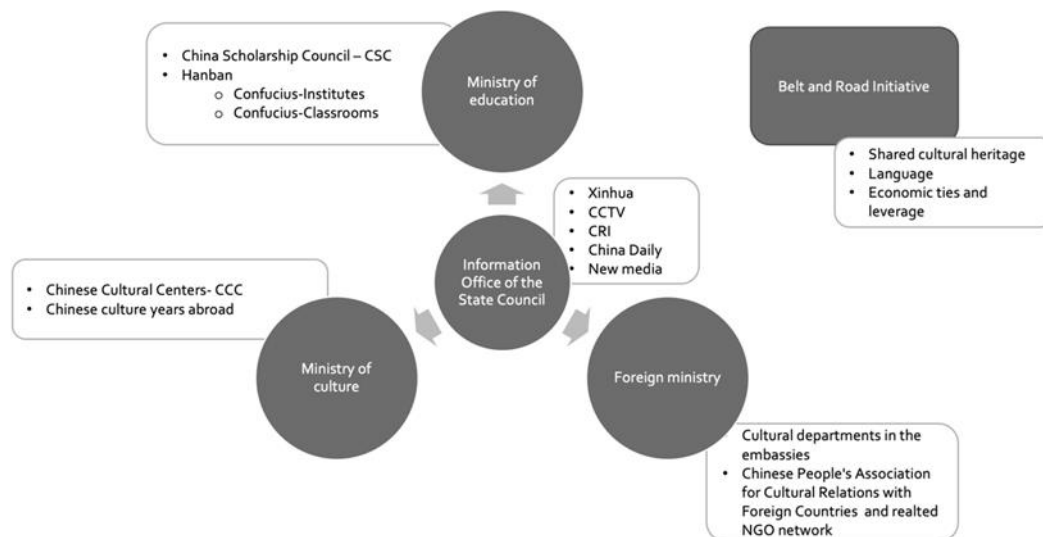
- Establish its own global system and ideology as an alternative to the US-led global order
  - Help shape international discourse and generate an attractive image and understanding of Chinese culture, particularly in developing countries
  - Counter and refute negative narratives about the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with the aim of bolstering influence and image to a domestic audience
- 

## POLICY CONTEXT

---

- Decline of US/Western hegemony, opening of multipolar space, especially in wake of Western mismanagement of COVID-19 pandemic
  - Hardening of Western political opposition, even as economic ties remain strong
  - Expanding reach of infrastructural and economic ties, including Africa, Latin America, Belt and Road Initiative countries
- 

## INSTITUTIONAL MAP



In China, foreign cultural and educational policy is predominantly conducted and coordinated by the state. There are few private actors. Organizations involved in the field are in most cases subordinate authorities under the responsibility of a ministry. Even if names such as “foundation” or “association” suggest a certain independence from government, these are also usually financed and controlled directly by the government or by the Chinese Communist Party. A total of around a dozen state organizations and ministries are involved in the planning and implementation of Chinese information, culture and education programmes abroad.

## FIELDS OF EXTERNAL CULTURAL POLICY

	2019	2015
<b>Culture and the Arts</b>		
Number of countries present	154	135
Number of institutes	Confucius Institute: 548 Confucius Classroom: 1,193	~500 ~1.000
Staff	Confucius Institute: 46,200	
Budget (€ million)	-	Confucius Institute: 452
Government support	-	240
<b>Language</b>		
Number of countries courses offered	154	135
Number of students enrolled	-	1.4 million
Number of candidates for language qualifications	-	6 million
Budget (€ million)	-	452
<b>Education - Primary &amp; Secondary</b>		
Number of countries present	1	N/A
Number of schools	1	N/A
Number of students	201	N/A
Number of staff / teachers	38	N/A
<b>Education - Tertiary</b>		
Number of universities / colleges	2,668	2,560
Number of students	500,000	396,531
Budget (€ million)	424 (2018)	-
Government financial support (€ million)	400	-

Science and Research	2019	2015
Number of countries present	Worldwide	Worldwide
Number of researchers/ staff	~1,500	~1,500
<b>Media (CGTN)</b>		
Number of countries broadcasted to	171	N/A (Previously CCTV, which had 140)
Number of languages	6	N/A
Number of channels	6	N/A
Audience / weekly (million)	~ 50 million	~45 million (2017)
Digital & social media audience (million)	Twitter: 14 million YouTube: 2.2 million Facebook: 115 million	N/A
Budget (€ million)	~2,000	1,800

#### CURRENT ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Despite its rise and strenuous efforts to boost its image abroad, China has struggled to improve its reputation in Western countries. Indeed, opinions of the country have declined across developed countries in the past year, despite China handling the COVID-19 pandemic far more successfully than most Western nations. The story is different in developing countries, notably Latin America and Africa. In many of these countries, China is valued as an important partner, particularly for its educational programmes. Additionally, the Chinese media presence is also viewed less critically and, especially in African countries, is welcomed as a counterweight to the influence of Western media. In view of crises in the West, such as disastrous COVID-19 responses and racist violence in the United States, China's narrative as an alternative to the Western system has the potential to gain purchase.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, SOURCES, AND REFERENCES

- A more comprehensive Country Report with a descriptive analysis is found here: *“China – ECP Monitor: Country Report”*
- A user-friendly Fact Sheet with additional data is here: *“China – ECP Monitor: Fact Sheet”*
- A full set of References are presented here: *“China – ECP Monitor: References”*

## Imprint

The External Cultural Policy Monitor

Developed by Helmut K Anheier, Hertie School & UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, and ifa Competence Centre. Supervised by Helmut K Anheier. Coordinated by Sarah Widmaier for ifa.

This paper is a summary of the respective Country Report.

Preferred citation

Knudsen, Edward (10/2021). "China. At a Glance," in: Helmut K. Anheier and ifa (eds.). The External Cultural Policy Monitor. Stuttgart: ifa.

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the ifa.

Publisher:

ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen)

Charlottenplatz 17,

70173 Stuttgart,

Postfach 10 24 63,

D-70020 Stuttgart

[www.ifa.de](http://www.ifa.de)

© ifa 2021

Author: Edward Knudsen

Copy-editing by:

ifa's Research Programme "Culture and Foreign Policy"

Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)



DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17901/ecp.2021.009>