

Both China and France are recognized as worldwide trade superpowers, with China at no1. and France at no6. in the world ranking of exports. In the current geopolitical situation, a significant number of EU member states including France recently showed interest in strengthening economic bonds with the democratic Republic of China (Taiwan) in order to cement the power and economic autonomy of democratic states in the global market while Taiwan providing efficient, reliable and ethical trade deals to the Union. The Chinese government isn't too pleased by these decisions because of its complicated and very fragile geopolitical background. A very clear example of the People's Republic of China showing clear disagreement towards the recent relationship building between the EU and Taiwan is the Lithuanian blockade, in which a multitude of products with Lithuanian origin were banned on China's ground, which represents the world's biggest and most lucrative market. The reason: Taiwan opening a representative office in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. Could this pose as a threat for other member countries trying to do the similar?

Despite France's efforts to balance out trade power in the Indo-Pacific region and nationwide criticism towards China's often questionable trading schemes, the French Republic with the PRC have been maintaining and even strengthening bonds when it comes to trade. In the year 2019, both countries combined for 61,4 billion Euros in exported goods and services. These numbers have been only increasing in the following years. Just recently, both sides have agreed on a multi-million Euro deal to build giant infrastructural projects in regions such as Africa, South-East Asia or Eastern Europe. These include multiple plants of sustainable and renewable energy. This deal is the first ever of its kind when it comes to China, which only goes to show the importance of this relationship.

Holding the current EU presidency and being the world's 3rd largest exporter of weapons and arms according to its defense ministry, the French Republic holds quite a bit of power in the current state of geopolitics and world trade. While the trade relations with Taiwan are still in their early stages, there have been efforts from both sides to strive for deeper connection. As the French Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian publicly stated: "We're very proud to be contributing to the development of our Indo-Pacific partners' strategic autonomy," when speaking about the relationship with Taiwan. A group of five members of the French National Assembly visited Taipei back in December 2021 with the goal of relation-building and growing ties with the Republic.

The EUs, as long as France's trade with China is inevitable, as we have seen in the year 2020, when China overtook the United States as the biggest trade partner of the European Union. But during the pandemic, Taiwan has proven itself to be a reliable trade partner, thanks to its pharmaceutical and semiconductor industries respectively. Things are slowly but surely heading towards strengthening trade bonds with Taiwan and a possible creation of a BIA in the future. Despite this, the European Union must be prepared for China's possible sanctions and coercions. The EU could achieve this via building stronger economic bonds and trade links along with revisiting the One-China policy from the year 1949. A new trade deal should not be signed without also addressing China's environmental impact, ethics of their industries and violation of human rights.