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China Center

NEWSLETTER N°29

Articles, news and events on China.

The China Center is an interdepartmental and multidisciplinary Research Centre of the University of Macerata, founded in 2012 within the initiatives of the Department of Law.



Scientific Articles

Supply Chain Decoupling: Geopolitical Debates and Economic Dynamism in East Asia

Written by Mitsuyo Ando, Kazunobu Hayakawa and Fukunari Kimura, published online on 09/08/2023

The US–China confrontation and resulting supply chain decoupling have created significant uncertainties for private businesses. This paper investigates the impact of these developments on machinery international production networks in East Asia, particularly from the perspective of middle powers like Japan, using international trade statistics. Although sectoral trade data do not clearly indicate supply chain decoupling, specific US export controls do affect international transactions when examined at a granular level. Through econometric analysis, the authors assess the impact of certain US policies on Japanese exports to China. Recent intensification of US export controls on supercomputers and advanced integrated

circuits is expected to have further effects. However, the decoupling appears to be partial, with many International Production Networks (IPNs) likely to remain intact. The paper concludes with a discussion on the policy implications of these findings.

More sprawl than agglomeration: The multi-scale spatial patterns and industrial characteristics of varied development zones in China

Written by Liang Zhuang & Chao Ye, published online on 06/06/2023

Development zones are pivotal to global industrialization and urbanization. In China, these zones are classified into three functional types: industrial, economic and technological, and diversified, further divided into 13 categories. This study introduces a new theoretical framework based on the production of space theory to analyze the spatial patterns and industrial characteristics of these zones. The paper highlights that power dynamics and imbalanced capital allocation often result in development zones expanding more as land sprawls rather than true industrial agglomerations. Although policy planning authority is spread across various government levels, there is often a neglect of sustainable economic growth and urbanization. Future research should integrate theoretical and empirical evidence to explore the evolutionary mechanisms and transformation paths of development zones more thoroughly.

News from China



Are U.S.-China Talks Accomplishing Anything?

Written by Rishi Iyengar, posted by Foreign Policy on 24/05/2024

In a notable shift, China and the United States held two rare bilateral meetings this month amidst their escalating diplomatic conflict. The first meeting, on May 8-9 in Washington, focused on climate issues, including energy transition, greenhouse gases, and decarbonization, with plans for further discussions in Berkeley, California. The second meeting, on May 14 in Switzerland, initiated a dialogue on AI to address global risks posed by advanced AI systems. The recent meetings are rooted in a tentative diplomatic thaw from a November 2023 summit

between Presidents Biden and Xi. However, the underlying tensions are evident, with the U.S. maintaining strict technology protection policies and China continuing strategic partnerships with countries like Russia. These actions underscore the fragile nature of their cooperation.

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China's Hydrogen Revolution: Opportunities Ahead

Written and posted by CNEUCN on 30/05/2024

China is rapidly advancing its hydrogen energy sector, aiming to become a global powerhouse in hydrogen-powered transportation. The Daxing International Hydrogen Energy Demonstration Zone in Beijing is at the forefront, offering testing facilities and refueling stations. National ambitions include integrating hydrogen into various transportation modes by 2025, with incentives such as toll waivers for hydrogen vehicles. Recent long-distance tests for hydrogen-powered trucks highlight the sector's viability, with significant infrastructure expansion underway. Analysts predict substantial growth in hydrogen vehicle sales, following a successful year in 2023. China's pursuit of hydrogen energy aligns with economic and environmental goals, aiming to replicate the success seen in the electric vehicle market. Forecasts suggest a trillion-yuan industry by 2025, with hydrogen energy contributing over 10% to China's energy system by 2050. As China invests in hydrogen energy, opportunities for growth and innovation abound, with support available for businesses navigating the market.

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Back to Basics: How Gaokao Overhaul Sparks a Core Science Revival

Written by Li Xin, posted by Sixhtone on 23/05/2024

The recent gaokao reform in China mandates that physics and chemistry be prerequisites for 85% of science majors, prompting a surge in students choosing these subjects but also risking a return to the old divide between sciences and humanities. Implemented in response to a decline in students opting for challenging science subjects, the reform aims to ensure a steady supply of talent in science and engineering fields. However, this has created significant challenges for students who now face stiffer competition and a greater academic burden. Prior reforms allowed for more flexibility, enabling students to avoid difficult subjects and still pursue science-related majors, but this led to an uneven distribution of students and a talent shortfall in foundational sciences. The new policy counteracts this by requiring both physics and chemistry for most science majors.

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