



ReLaTe - Law and business in China in the framework of the EU and China investment and trade relations: the challenges of digital-tech age

RELATE YEARLY AGENDA - 2024

During the **second year** of the Jean Monnet module from the second half of September until December 2024 a **48- hour teaching course** named **ReLaTe - Law and business in China in the framework of the EU and China investment and trade relations: the challenges of digital-tech age** will be delivered to students of both the Italian Single cycle Law Degree in Law and in the two-year international LLM in Legal Studies (LEGS) at the UNIBO Department of Legal Studies (DSG). The course, all taught in English, is divided in three scientific blocks complemented by focus seminars that provide the students with specific insights on the topic of the single scientific blocks.

The **first scientific block** focuses on tracing the development of the dialogue between the EU and China, aimed at deepening and strengthening their trade and investment relations, along with the associated legislative framework. This reconstruction begins with the first initiatives in the mid-1990s and extends to the landmark achievement of the EU-China Comprehensive Investment Agreement (CAI), concluded in principle in 2020. Specifically, the first scientific block examines the policies and strategies adopted by the EU towards China, which have evolved from fostering comprehensive and strategic engagement to simultaneously viewing China as a partner for cooperation, an economic competitor, and a systemic rival. On China's side, the new strategies introduced by the Chinese government, including the Belt and Road Initiative and its impact on the EU and its Member States, are explored. Additionally, the CAI is analyzed in depth, particularly its legal implications. To provide context for this bilateral agreement, the legislative framework governing foreign direct investment is examined, highlighting the approaches



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of both the EU and China, along with the recent enactment of China's Foreign Investment Law.

The **second scientific block** is devoted to exploring the emergence of a new framework for global governance from a digital perspective. It examines the regulatory approaches adopted by the EU and China, as well as the results of their bilateral dialogue, highlighting areas of alignment, divergence, and potential complementary initiatives. To achieve this, the analysis first delves into how the EU is shaping its digital sovereignty by balancing the advantages and opportunities of digital technologies with their associated risks and challenges. Key strategic tools are examined, including policies like the Digital Single Market Strategy and the European Commission Digital Strategy, alongside legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Act, the Data Governance Act, the Digital Markets Act, the Digital Services Act, and the proposed AI Act. This scientific block also considers the evolving case law of the European Court of Justice, including landmark cases in the digital domain, which are shaping EU digital governance. The section then shifts to how China is constructing its digital governance framework, analyzing key policy documents such as Made in China 2025 and the 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Digital Economy, alongside significant legislation like the Cybersecurity Law, the Data Protection Law, and the Personal Information Protection Law. Judicial interpretations from the Supreme People's Court are also taken into consideration to uncover the strategies underpinning China's approach. Particular attention is dedicated also to the Digital Silk Road initiative.

The **third scientific block** addresses the analysis on specific digital sectors, including e-commerce, personal data, and artificial intelligence, to identify global regulatory trends and the approaches adopted by the EU and China. The aim is to highlight areas of convergence. The analysis not only compares similarities and differences between the two regulatory frameworks, but it also explores the connections emerging from the dialogue between the EU and China, specifically carried out through the legal cooperation (as it



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happened with the Chinese E-Commerce Law in which the EU contributions to its drafting was significant).

During the lectures period, teachers and students work on the realization of a **podcast** series which aim at deepening some topics covered during the course, thus disseminating the contents of the Module to the public as well.

In 2024 the following **seminars** will be organized: in November 2024 a full-day focus seminar on AI will be organized by Prof. Giusella Finocchiaro, Prof. Marina Timoteo and Prof. Alessandro Amoroso; in November 2024 Prof. Angela Carpi will deliver a two-hour focus seminar dedicated to the EU and China IPR cooperation in the framework of the digital age; in December 2024 a three-hour focus seminar on the emerging concept of digital sovereignty will be delivered by Prof. Federico Casolari; in April 2025 Prof. Valeria Zanier will organize a two-hour seminar on economic and cultural exchanges between EU and China.

All the seminars will be open to entrepreneurs, lawyers, advisors, and other professionals who operate in the digital sector and in the field of investment and trade with China.

At the end of the 48-hour course a **study-visit to the Bologna Technopole**, center of innovation and experimentation for industrial research and technology transfer, will be organized in order to allow the students to get in touch with experts who work in this center and learn about the European supercomputer Leonardo, one of the most powerful supercomputers in the world.

In April 2025 a three-hour **workshop for high-school students** will be organized. This workshop aims at presenting the students the regulatory framework in the field of data protection, comparing the EU and China experiences, in order to raise awareness on how their personal data are used and, therefore, promote a responsible use of digital technology.



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