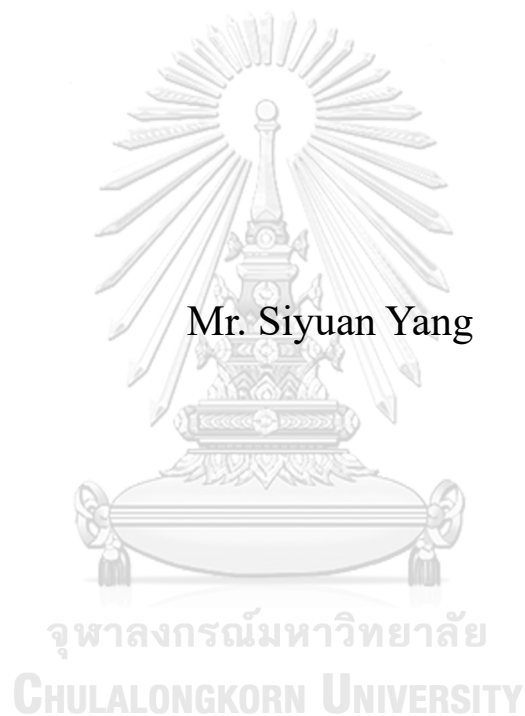


**EU'S VIEWS ON CHINA'S ROLE IN RUSSIA'S WAR OF  
AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE**



An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts in European Studies  
Inter-Department of European Studies  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
Chulalongkorn University  
Academic Year 2022  
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มุมมองของสหภาพยุโรปเกี่ยวกับบทบาทของจีนในสงครามยูเครนของรัสเซีย



สารนิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต  
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บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
ปีการศึกษา 2565  
ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

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OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE  
By                                      Mr. Siyuan Yang  
Field of Study                      European Studies  
Thesis Advisor                      Associate Professor Dr. CHAYODOM SABHASRI

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Accepted by the GRADUATE SCHOOL, Chulalongkorn University in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master of Arts

INDEPENDENT STUDY COMMITTEE

Chairman

.....  
(Associate Professor Dr. BHAWAN RUANGSILP)

Advisor

.....  
(Associate Professor Dr. CHAYODOM SABHASRI)

Examiner

.....  
(Professor Martin Holland)



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สาขาวิชา ยุโรปศึกษา  
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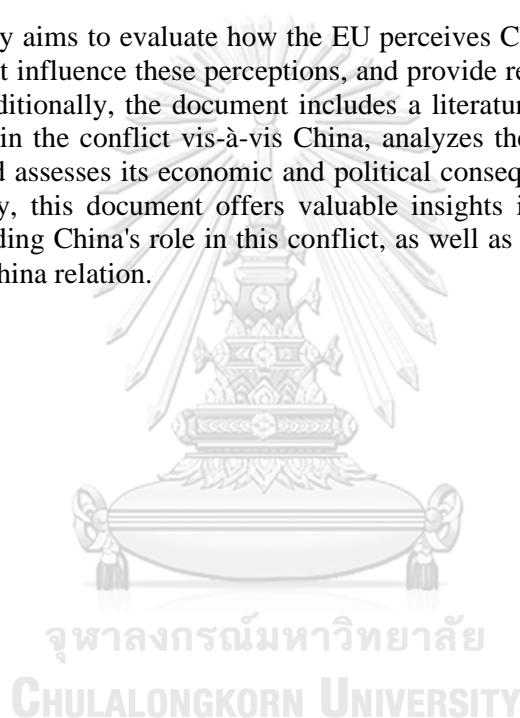
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Siyuan Yang : EU'S VIEWS ON CHINA'S ROLE IN RUSSIA'S WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE. Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. CHAYODOM SABHASRI

The document primarily discusses the European Union's stance on China's involvement in Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine. The EU has been closely monitoring the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, with a particular focus on China's position regarding this matter. The European Union has expressed apprehension over China's neutrality in the conflict, as well as its increasing military cooperation with Russia. The document emphasizes the EU's call for China to assume a more proactive role in resolving conflicts and promoting peace within the region.

This study aims to evaluate how the EU perceives China's stance in the conflict, identify factors that influence these perceptions, and provide recommendations for China's future actions. Additionally, the document includes a literature review that examines the EU's involvement in the conflict vis-à-vis China, analyzes the context and impact of the Ukrainian war, and assesses its economic and political consequences for both the EU and China. Collectively, this document offers valuable insights into the EU's concerns and expectations regarding China's role in this conflict, as well as its implications for regional stability and EU-China relation.



Field of Study: European Studies  
Academic Year: 2022

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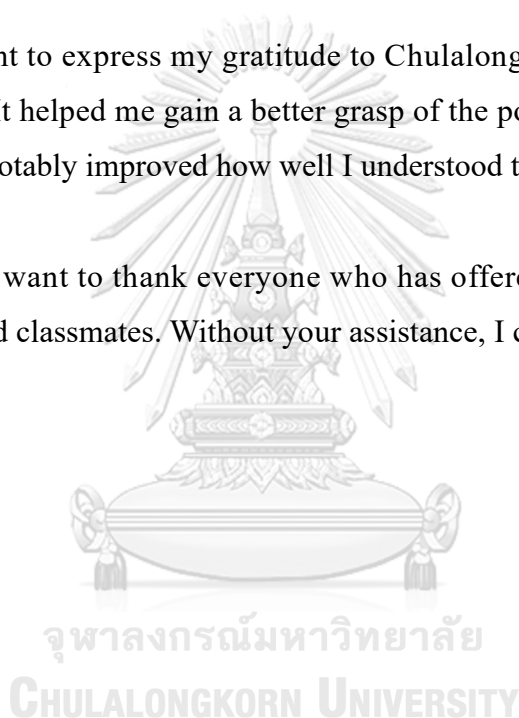
I would want to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who helped me with my study.

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# PART 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Statement of Problem

In recent years, the war in Ukraine has become one of the focuses of the international community. Russia's aggression in Ukraine has sparked concern and condemnation across the globe. As Europe's largest political and economic union, the EU has played a major role in dealing with the crisis in Ukraine. The purpose of this study is to explore the EU's view of China's role in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and to analyze the reasons and implications behind it.

The European Union has been closely monitoring the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and the role of other global powers in this conflict. In recent years, China has emerged as a significant player in global politics and its stance on the issue has been of particular interest to the EU. The EU has been assessing China's position on the conflict and its implications for the Russia and Ukraine region's stability.

This Individual Study will explore the EU's view of China's role in the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU's view of China's role in the Russian and Ukraine War is complex, given China's economic and strategic ties to both Russia and Ukraine. On the one hand, China has sought to maintain cordial relations with both countries and has refrained from taking sides in the conflict. On the other hand, China's growing global ambitions and its need for energy resources have led it to deepen its economic ties with Russia, even in the face of Western sanctions. This has led some in the EU to question China's commitment to a rules-based international order and to wonder whether China is prioritizing its own interests over regional stability. In this Individual Study, we will explore the various factors that have shaped the EU's view of China's role in the conflict and the implications of this for EU-China relations.

The European Union has been closely monitoring the role played by China in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. China has been perceived as a key player in this conflict due to its close economic ties with both Russia and Ukraine.

The EU has expressed concerns over China's perceived neutrality towards the conflict. While China has called for the peaceful resolution of the conflict, it has refrained from taking any concrete steps to support either side. This has led the EU to question China's commitment to maintaining regional stability and promoting peace.

Furthermore, the EU has also raised concerns over China's growing military presence in the Russia and Ukraine region. China's increased military cooperation with Russia has raised eyebrows in the EU, with many viewing it as a sign of China's tacit support for Russia's actions in Ukraine.

The EU has called on China to take a more active role in resolving the conflict and promoting peace in the region. The EU has also urged China to use its influence with Russia to encourage a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

In conclusion, the EU's view of China's role in the Russian and Ukraine War is one of concern. The EU believes that China has a crucial role to play in promoting peace and stability in the region, and that its current neutrality is not conducive to achieving this goal. The EU has called on China to take a more active role in resolving the conflict and promoting peace.

## **1.2 Significance of the study**

This study is important for gaining insight into the EU's perception of China's role in the war in Ukraine. It will help enhance the understanding of changes in the international political landscape and the development of China-Eu relations, provide reference for relevant decision-making, and promote the international community's in-depth understanding and response to the Ukraine crisis.

### **1.3 Research purpose**

The objective of this research is to understand and analyze the EU's view of China's role in the Russian and Ukraine War. Specifically, the research aims to:

- (1) Evaluate the EU's perceptions of China's stance on the conflict and its implications for Russia and Ukraine regional stability.
- (2) Identify the factors that have shaped the EU's view of China's role in the conflict.
- (3) To combine two points on how EU responds to China and how it affect EU and China relation.
- (4) Recommendation what should China and EU do in the future.

The research will involve a thorough analysis of relevant literature, including academic journals, policy papers, and news articles. The findings of this research will contribute to a better understanding of the EU's position on China's role in the conflict and inform policy decisions aimed at promoting regional stability and strengthening EU-China relations.

### **1.4 Research Methodology**

This Individual Study will use literature review and analysis methods, collect and summarize relevant literature materials, and conduct an in-depth analysis of the EU's views on China's role in the war in Ukraine. At the same time, the research questions will be further interpreted and analyzed in the light of international political theories and the relevant viewpoints of the research on China and EU relations.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

A. Background and impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

- (1) What is the background of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine?
- (2) What are the economic and political effects of the war on the European Union?
- (3) What are the effects of the war on China economically and politically?

B. Cooperation and differences between the EU and China on the war between Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

- (1) What are the cooperation measures between the two sides in the international

arena?

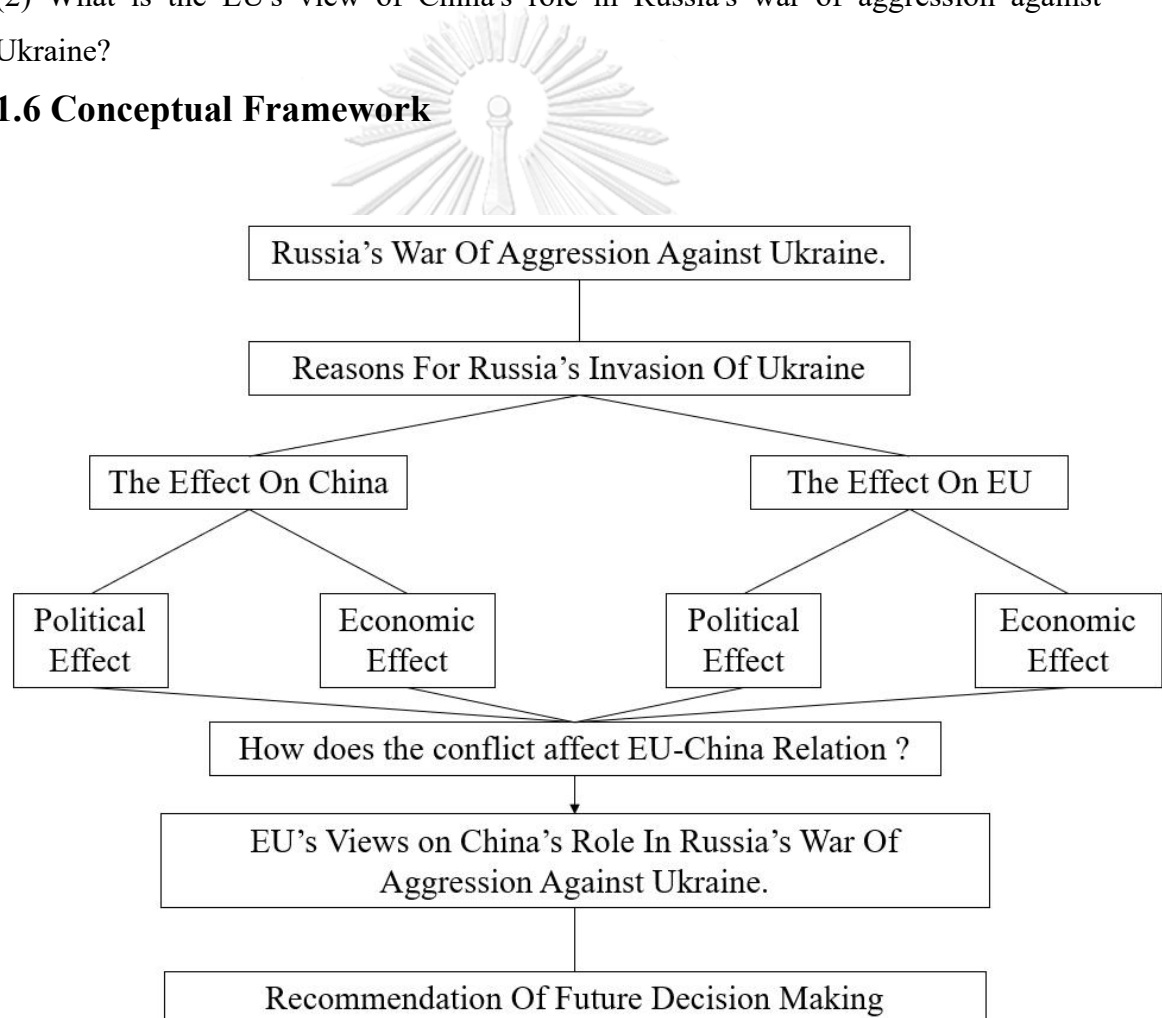
(2) What are the differences between the two sides on the issue of Ukraine? The reason?

C. Cognition and evaluation of the role of the EU and China in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

(1) What statements has the EU made regarding China's actions in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine?

(2) What is the EU's view of China's role in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine?

## 1.6 Conceptual Framework



## **PART 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **(1) Introduction.**

The Russo-Ukrainian war has drawn global attention, prompting analysis of various actors' involvement in the conflict. This literature review aims to examine the European Union's perspective on China's role in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. By exploring relevant literature, official documents, and scholarly works, this review seeks to shed light on the EU's stance and policy towards China's involvement in the conflict.

#### **(2) Methodology:**

To conduct this literature review, a comprehensive search was conducted across scholarly databases, policy institutes, and official EU documents. The key terms used included "European Union," "China," "Russo-Ukrainian war," "EU-China relations," "foreign policy," "Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine," and "international actors." The selected sources were critically evaluated for their relevance, reliability, and scholarly rigor.

#### **(3) Findings:**

First, in European academia, some scholars focus on the geopolitical relationship between the EU and China. They analyzed China's positions and actions in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and assessed the EU's response to it. These studies provide a European perspective on the assessment of China's role and changes in attitudes.

Second, in the field of international relations, some scholars have explored the roles played by the EU and China in global affairs and the interaction between them. They analyzed the sides' positions on conflicts, crises and geopolitical issues, and tried to decipher how the EU views China's role in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

In addition, in the field of international security studies, some scholars focus on the actions and influence of the EU and China in geopolitical conflicts. By analyzing the military capabilities, diplomatic strategies and interest demands of both sides, they assess the EU's views and responses to China's role in t Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

## **2.1 Background and impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**

The backdrop to the Ukraine war is due to historical tensions and territorial disputes between Russia and Ukraine. Relations between Russia and Ukraine have been tense since the collapse of the Soviet Union, especially over the Crimea issue. Russia regards Ukraine as its border, and no one can cross it, so it regards Ukraine as a buffer state and requires it to remain neutral and not form alliances with other European countries. Additionally, Ukraine's desire to be independent and aligned with NATO and the EU poses a threat to Russia's national security and leads to Russian military action.

Crimea is a peninsula in Ukraine, located in southern Ukraine, surrounded by the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, and separated from Russia by the Klich Strait. Ukraine is seen not only as related to Russia, but also directly connected to countries in Central Europe and the Black Sea region. Due to Ukraine's strategic position, Russia is concerned that NATO will absorb new members in Eastern Europe and introduce military power into its own backyard, so it is opposed to Ukraine's accession to NATO.

Russia has taken military action in its conflict with Ukraine. Although Russia claims that its military action is to protect people who have been abused and genocide in Ukraine, and that it will not occupy Ukrainian territory, its real purpose is to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO to protect its own strategic interests.

The conflict has potentially significant implications for global security and the

economy, leading the international community to condemn Russia's actions as a violation of international law.(Elsherbiny March 7 , 2022)

Russia's invasion of Ukraine constitutes the biggest threat to peace and security in Europe since the end of the Cold War. (Mankoff April 22, 2022). On February 21, 2022, Russian president Vladimir Putin gave a bizarre and at times unhinged speech laying out a long list of grievances as justification for the "special military operation" announced the following day.

On February 24, 2022, Putin authorized the Russian army to conduct "special operations" in Ukraine and landed on the southern coast of Ukraine.

Motivated by many factors, Russia's aggression in Ukraine has triggered the greatest security crisis in Europe since the Cold War. While the United States and its allies have taken significant punitive actions against Russia, they have made little headway in helping to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity.(Masters 2022)

Since February 24, 2022, Russia has been waging a war of aggression in Ukraine and blatantly attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure. The recent shift in Russian strategy to a war of attrition carries ominous implications for civilian survival, the future of Ukraine as a nation-state, and the restraint that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries must practice to ward off Russia's threat of nuclear escalation. This conflict, initiated by an unprovoked Russian invasion, has inflicted death and widespread suffering on Ukrainian civilians and military personnel. More than 7.1 million Ukrainians have been displaced within their country, and approximately 5.3 million have crossed borders to become refugees in other European countries.(Levy and Leaning 2022)

## **2.2 The economic and political impact of the war on the European Union**

The European Union (EU) was affected by the war mainly in economic and political aspects. On the economic front, the war has made energy security a crucial issue for Europe, especially its dependence on Russian gas. The EU has announced a roadmap to phase out imports of Russian oil and gas by 2027 and ban Russian coal imports in



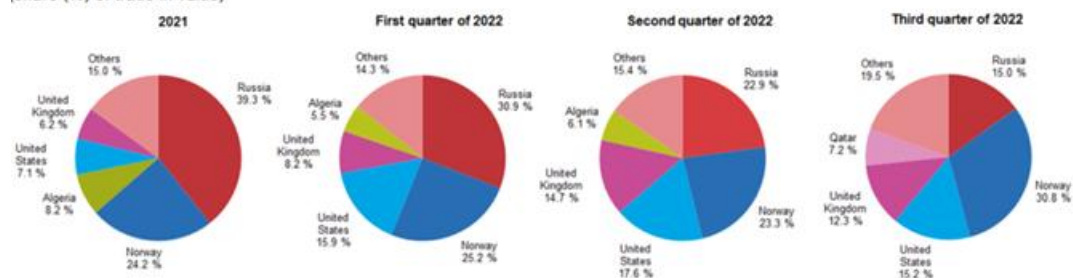
August 2022. However, weaning EU from their dependence on Russian energy will take time, substantial investment and political will. Europe is considering a number of paths, including increasing the use of liquefied natural gas (LNG), burning more coal and delaying the phase-out of nuclear power.

On the political front, the war strengthened European unity, especially in terms of supporting Ukraine and alleviating the energy crisis. The European Union has played an important role in the response to the war, protecting Europe's energy security by sanctioning Russia and promoting the reduction of Russia's energy dependence. In addition, NATO played an important role in supporting Ukraine, facilitating communication and information sharing among European countries. In conclusion, the impact of the Russo-Ukrainian war on the European Union was significant both economically and politically. Achieving energy security and reducing dependence on Russia is one of the EU's current important tasks, and requires the joint efforts and cooperation of European countries. (Ozawa 2022)

**(1) Economic impact.**

In my perception, Russia has long had a cooperative relationship with the EU on energy. Secondly, in Figure 1 we can see that in 2021, it will be the EU's largest importer of natural gas, and 40% of the natural gas consumed by the EU will come from Russia. So when the Russo-Ukrainian war broke out, the first impact on the EU was the lack of energy. The implications are fatal for many member states of the EU, such as Germany and Italy.

### Extra-EU imports of natural gas by partner (share (%) of trade in value)



Source: Eurostat database (Comext) and Eurostat estimates

eurostat

Figure 1 Source: Eurostat 2022

In Figure 2&3, we can see that this is the change of key energy prices, especially after the outbreak of the Russo-Ukrainian War on February 24, 2022, the price fluctuates greatly, the price rises sharply, and the increase in international energy prices is even more serious.

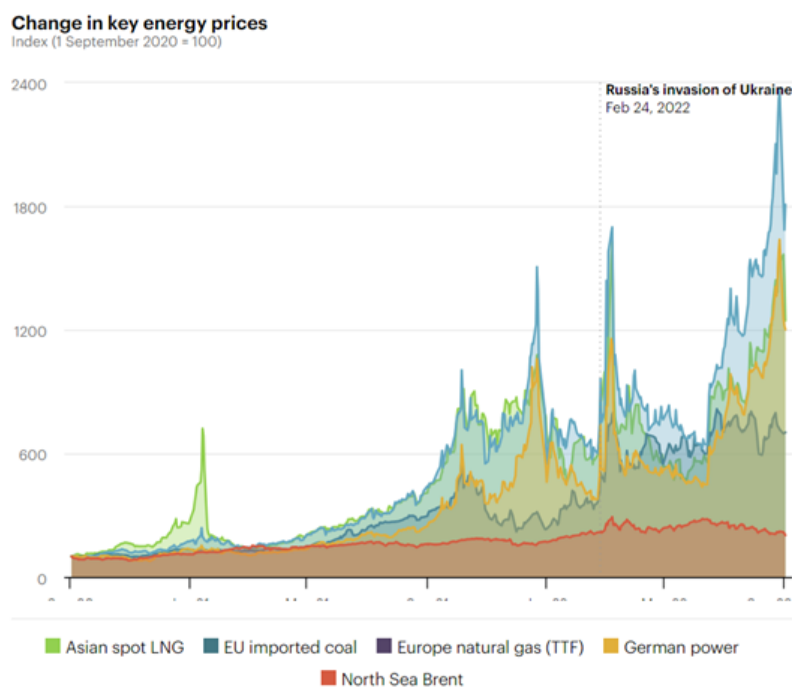


Figure 2 Sources: Statista 2023

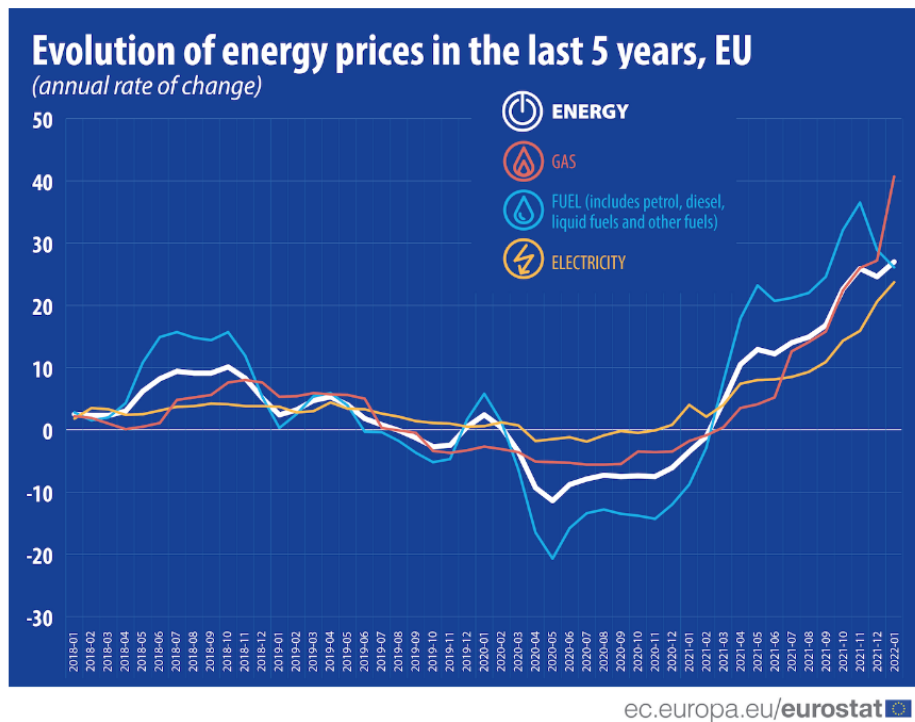


Figure 3 Source: Eurostat

Such an effect on prices is bound to lead to higher inflation. Figure 4 shows the inflation rate of the EU Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) from January 1997 to January 2023. From the figure, we can conclude that after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine War, the inflation rate of the EU reached nearly two decades to the highest peak, it is very serious.

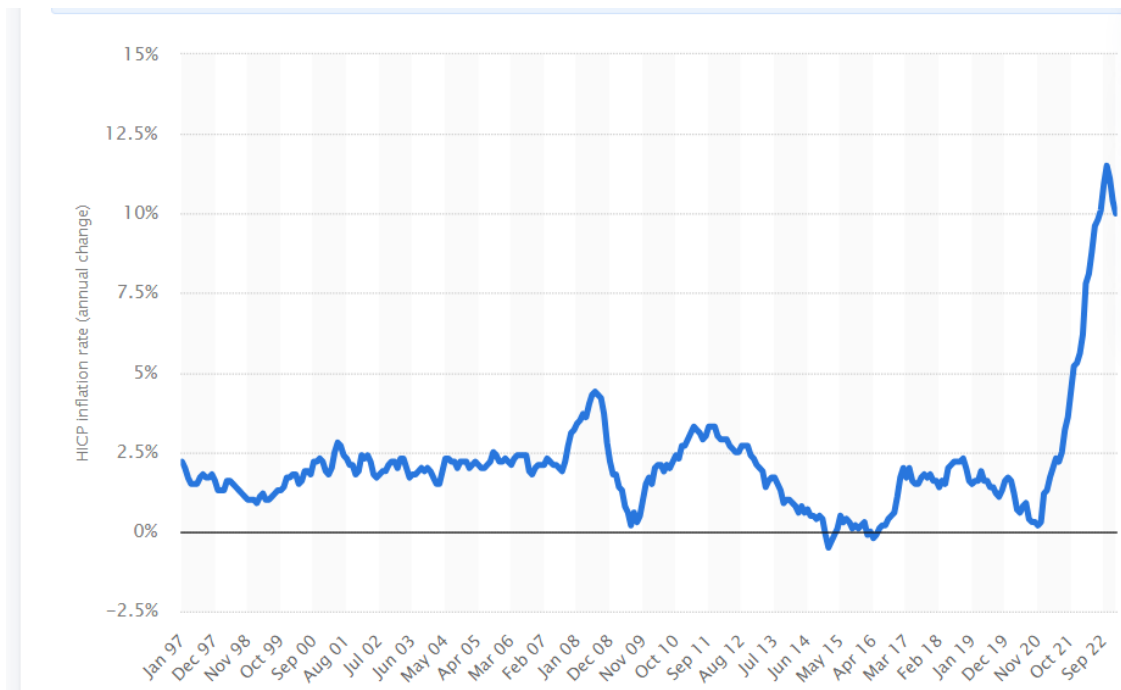
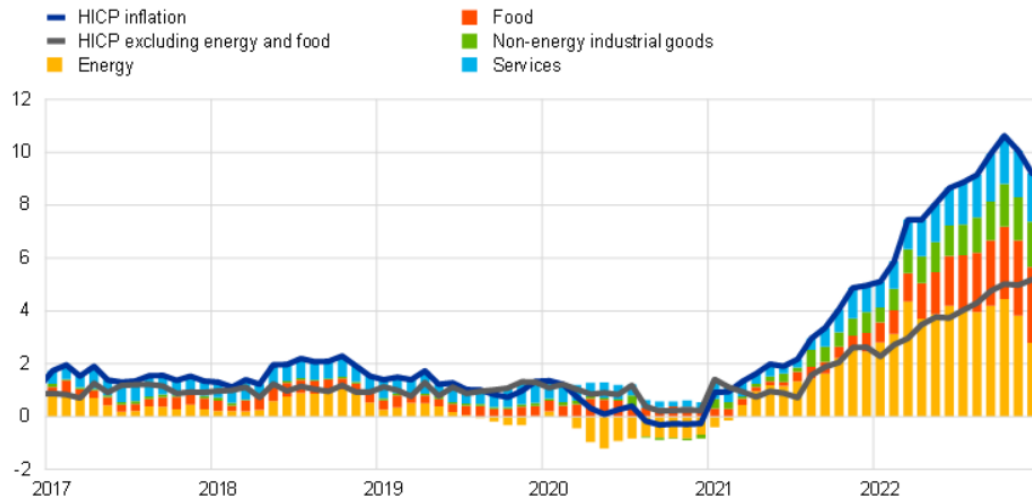


Figure 4 Source: Statista 2023

Headline inflation in the euro area, as measured by the Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices (HICP), will average 8.4% in 2022, up sharply from an average of 2.6% in 2021. Inflation soared throughout the year, causing inflation to rise by around 10% year-on-year in subsequent months. Energy prices are the most important factor behind the rise in headline inflation, and food prices are also rising strongly, especially after Russia invaded Ukraine in February. In addition, persistent supply bottlenecks for manufactured goods, a recovery in demand after the easing of pandemic-related restrictions, especially in the services sector, and a weaker euro fueled inflationary pressures (Figure 5).

## Headline inflation and its main components

(annual percentage changes; percentage point contributions)



Sources: Eurostat and ECB calculations.

Note: The latest observations are for December 2022.

Figure 5 Source : Eurostat and ECB calculations

Overall, price pressures are spreading to a growing number of industries, partly because of the indirect impact of high energy costs on the economy as a whole. Differences in inflation rates across the euro area have also increased significantly, largely reflecting differing exposure to commodity and energy price shocks. Most measures of underlying inflation have risen sharply this year. (Bank 2022)

## (2) Political Impact.

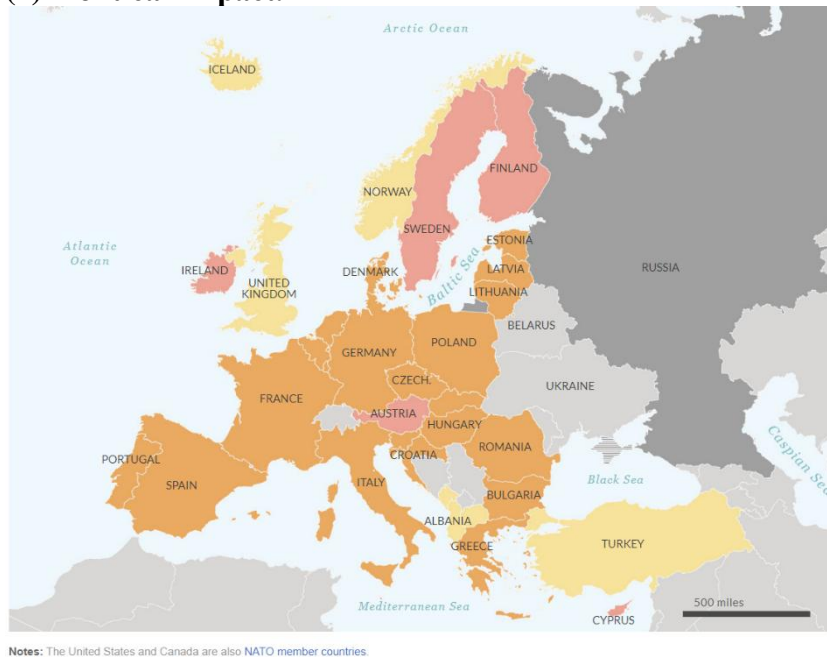


Figure 6 Source : NATO on the map

## (3) Political Impact.

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Europe has shown unprecedented unity. The European Union has provided assistance to Ukraine in many ways and imposed sanctions and restrictions on Russia. Russia is fighting not just Ukraine, but all of NATO.

Although the EU has become more united, it is not at the same pace. Hungary, for example, is less supportive of a ban on Russian oil imports to weaken Russia's war capability.

Through the analysis of the official documents of the European Union, I came to the following conclusions. The war's political impact on Europe was unprecedented.

The first is a shift in the attitude of neutral countries. More than half of Finns want their country to join the NATO, up from less than 30% in January. Sweden has provided weapons to a country at war for the first time since 1939, when it helped neighboring Finland defend itself against the Soviet invasion, and has announced

sanctions against Russia along with the European Union. Austria, a permanently neutral country, recently closed its airspace to Russian aircraft. (青木 March 2022)

The second is the EU's growing desire for strategic autonomy. In March 2022, the EU issued A Strategic Compass for Security and Defense, which aims to make the EU "a stronger and more capable provider of security" and decided to establish a rapid reaction force, It is a very important step forward for the EU in the area of security and defense policy.(Lenzu March 2022). It can be seen that the Russia-Ukraine war strengthened the willingness of European countries to increase the EU's defense capacity building and strengthened the EU's determination to play an important role in European defense and security. To be clear, the EU is not trying to replace NATO, but is trying to reduce its dependence on the United States and NATO. (倪峰, 达巍 et al. 2022)

The third is that the EU and Russia have contradictory plans to move towards confrontation. The EU made it clear that Europe was in danger.(Team May 2022). The EU clearly sees Russia as the number one threat, and this has allowed the EU to temporarily put aside its internal differences of interest and become highly united (at least for the time being). The European Union has imposed tough economic sanctions on Russia, which have also had a considerable impact on the economic and energy ties that sustain Russia-EU relations, which have become increasingly rigid and confrontational.

The fourth is to revive NATO's role. Despite the unprecedented strengthening of the dynamics of European integration, the relationship between the United States and Europe has become increasingly close. The outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war meant the bankruptcy of the "Normandy model" and the Minsk Agreement, and also declared the failure of the mediation between the leaders of Germany and France, which seriously frustrated the "strategic autonomy" advocated by the EU.(赵隆 May 2022). For the EU, maintaining the military alliance with the United States can better cope with the crisis at present. NATO has been reactivated and endowed with value,

and the political and military alliance between the United States and Europe has been strengthened, which also objectively enhances the control of the United States over Europe.(黄颖 Oct 2022). Europe knows that it cannot live without the United States and NATO for a long time, so while promoting strategic autonomy, it constantly emphasizes that the defense construction of the EU is a "supplement" rather than a "substitute" for NATO.(冯仲平 Oct 2022). However, if the Russia-Ukraine war continues for a long time, Europe is likely to become an "arena" for the United States and Russia, which the EU does not want to see and is also an important proposition at the moment.

Generally speaking, the Ukraine crisis has changed the European security landscape. With the EU and Russia moving towards a serious confrontation, the EU's sense of urgency to develop independent defense has been further strengthened and its determination has become more firm. At the same time, however, NATO was reactivated, and Europe had to admit that it would not be able to separate itself from the United States and NATO any time soon.

### **2.3 The Economic and political impact of the war on China.**

The repercussions China faces in the Ukraine war are both economic and political. Economically, the biggest impact of the Russia-Ukraine War on China was the price of gasoline. The Ukrainian war has also had a negative impact on China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative and China-Ukraine economic relations. Politically, the war in Ukraine has affected the EU's attitude towards China to a certain extent. Western countries reassess their relations with China for national security reasons and may impose secondary sanctions on China, which will have an impact on China's status in the international political arena. (Bo 2023)

#### **(1) Economic impact.**

Figure 6 shows the changes in China's oil prices in the past three years, and the Y-axis in the figure is the price of China's oil per barrel (in US dollars). What is particularly obvious is that since the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war, China's oil prices have



remained high, and even the lowest point was the highest peak price during the Sino-US trade war.

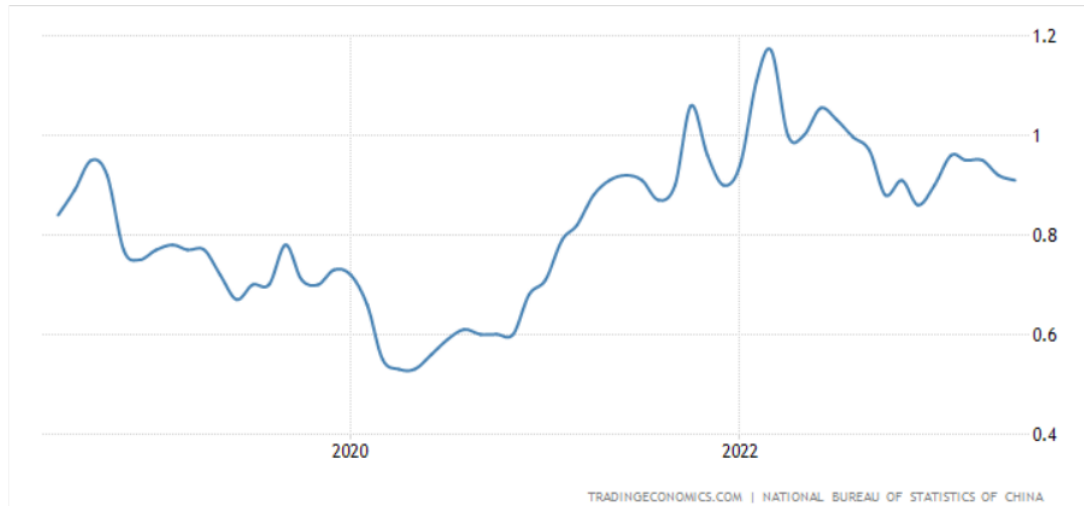


Figure 7 Source : Trading Economics

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine hinders the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative. Figure 7 is a road map of China's Belt and Road Initiative. In the figure, we can see that the two northernmost routes pass through Russian territory. China, Russia and Ukraine have important cooperation projects in the "Belt and Road" construction. However, due to the impact of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the investment projects signed between China and these two countries have been restricted, and the Chinese capital market is facing greater investment risks. For China, the vast Russian landmass is the most reliable land route to the wealthy EU market. The outbreak of the Russo-Ukraine war will have a significant impact on China's largest overseas economic project.

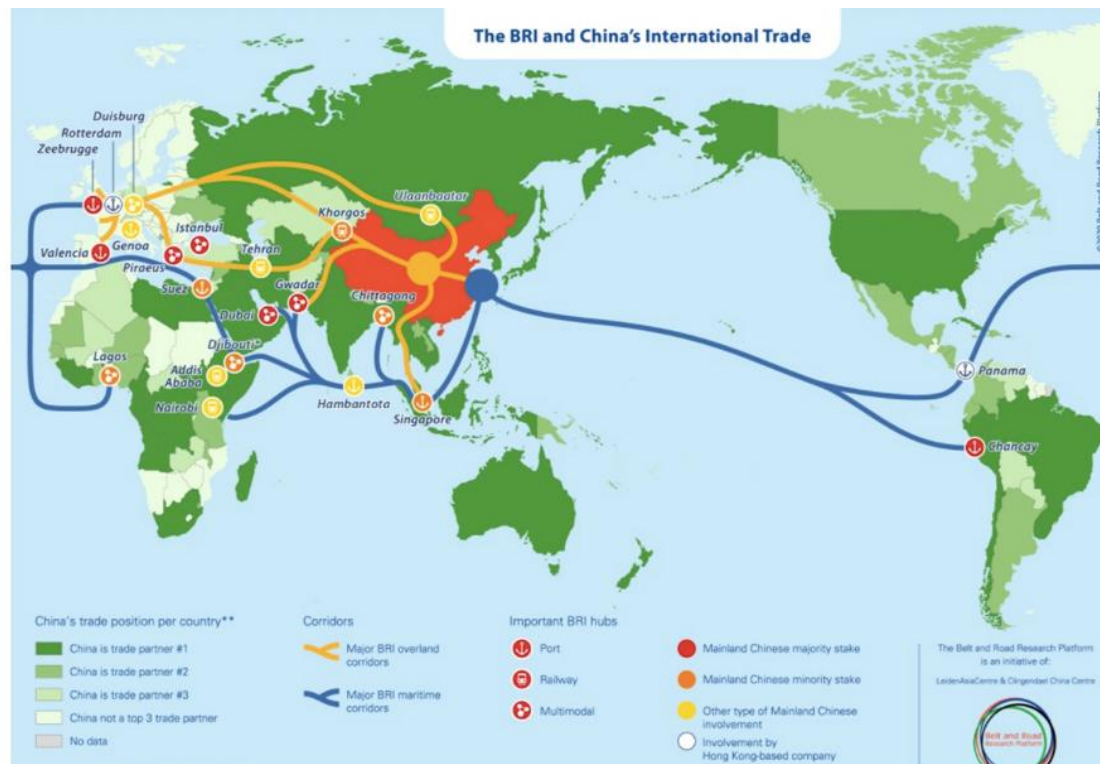


Figure 8 Source : LeidenAsiaCentre and the Clingendael China Centre

The impact of the Russo-Ukraine war on China also comes from agricultural products. Figure 8 is a list of Russian products exported to China in 2022. It can be seen from the figure that agricultural products account for a large proportion. China is a large agricultural country and has a high degree of dependence on agricultural products. Affected by the Russo-Ukrainian War, the export of agricultural products was restricted, which had a great impact on the international trade of Chinese agricultural products.

Item no.	GN group No.	Name	Export volume (million dollars) January - March 2022	Share in total exports (%)	Changes to the same period in 2021 (%)
1	27	Mineral fuel, oil, petroleum products	16,170.7	74.4	52.16
2	74-80	Non-ferrous metals	1,239.29	5.7	17.17
3	44-48	Wood processing products	1,154.67	5.31	5.29
4	1-24	Agricultural and food products	1,146.86	5.28	35.41
5	26	Ores, slags, ashes	758.05	3.49	-23.11
6	72	Ferrous metals	399.29	1.84	3.26
7	31	Fertilizers	299.33	1.38	59.39

Figure 9 Source : EuraSian Rail Alliance Index

(2) Political Impact.

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<b>Item 5 - Draft resolution A/ES-11/L.1</b>						
<b>Aggression against Ukraine</b>						
+ AFGHANISTAN + ALBANIA X ALGERIA + ANDORRA X ANGOLA + ANTIGUA-BARBUDA + ARGENTINA X ARMENIA + AUSTRALIA + AUSTRIA + AZERBAIJAN + BAHAMAS + BAHRAIN X BANGLADESH + BARBADOS + BELARUS + BELGIUM + BELIZE + BENIN + BHUTAN X BOLIVIA + BOSNIA-HERZEGOV... + BOTSWANA + BRAZIL + BRUNEI DARUSSAL... + BULGARIA + BURUNDI + CABO VERDE + CAMBODIA	+ CAMEROON X CENTRAL AFR REP... + CHAD X CHILE X CHINA + COLOMBIA + COMOROS X CONGO + COSTA RICA + CROATIA X CUBA + CYPRUS + CZECH REPUBLIC + DEM PR OF KOREA + DEM REP OF THE C... + DENMARK + DJIBOUTI + DOMINICA + DOMINICAN REP... + ECUADOR X EL SALVADOR X EQUATORIAL GUINEA + ERITREA + ESTONIA + ESWATINI + ETHIOPIA + FIJI	+ FINLAND + FRANCE + GABON + GAMBIA + GEORGIA + GERMANY + GHANA + GREECE + GRENADA + GUATEMALA + GUINEA + GUINEA-BISSAU + GUYANA + HAITI + HONDURAS + HUNGARY + ICELAND X INDIA + INDONESIA X IRAN (ISLAMIC REP... X IRAQ + IRELAND + JAMAICA + JAPAN + JORDAN X KAZAKHSTAN + KENYA + KIRIBATI	+ KUWAIT X KYRGYZSTAN X LAO PDR + LATVIA + LEBANON + LESOTHO + LIBERIA + LIBYA + LIECHTENSTEIN + LITHUANIA + LUXEMBOURG X MADAGASCAR + MALAWI + MALAYSIA + MALDIVES + MALI + MALTA + MARSHALL ISLANDS + MAURITANIA + MAURITIUS + MEXICO + MICRONESIA (FS) + MONACO X MONGOLIA + MONTENEGRO + MOROCCO X MOZAMBIQUE + MYANMAR + NAMIBIA + NAURU	+ NEPAL + NETHERLANDS X NEW ZEALAND X NICARAGUA + NIGER + NIGERIA + NORTH MACEDONIA + NORWAY + OMAN + PAKISTAN + PALAU + PANAMA + PAPUA NEW GUINEA + PARAGUAY + PERU + PHILIPPINES + POLAND + PORTUGAL + QATAR + REP OF KOREA + REP OF MOLDOVA + ROMANIA + RUSSIAN FED... + RWANDA + SAINT KITTS-NEVIS + SAINT LUCIA + SAINT VINCENT-GR... + SAMOA + SAN MARINO + SAO TOME-PRINCIPE	+ SAUDI ARABIA X SENEGAL + SERBIA + SEYCHELLES + SIERRA LEONE + SINGAPORE + SLOVAKIA + SLOVENIA + SOLOMON ISLANDS + SOMALIA X SOUTH AFRICA X SOUTH SUDAN + SPAIN X SRI LANKA X SUDAN + SURINAME + SWEDEN + SWITZERLAND + SYRIAN ARAB REP... X TAJIKISTAN + THAILAND + TIMOR-LESTE + TOGO + TONGA + TRINIDAD-TOBAGO + TUNISIA + TURKEY + TURKMENISTAN + TUVALU X UGANDA	+ UKRAINE + UNITED ARAB EMIR... + UNITED KINGDOM X UNITED REP TANZA... + UNITED STATES + URUGUAY + UZBEKISTAN + VANUATU + VENEZUELA X VIET NAM + YEMEN + ZAMBIA X ZIMBABWE
+ IN FAVOUR:141		- AGAINST:5	X ABSTENTION:35			

Figure 10 Source : United Nation.

I don't think the Russia-Ukraine war will change China's current diplomatic stance. Before the war broke out, President Xi Jinping met Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing on the sidelines of the Olympics, and the two said the Sino-Russian partnership had reached new depths, releasing a large strategic document that described the two countries as always close. There are "no limits" to this relationship. However, after the outbreak of the war, this partnership was tested, but instead of picking sides, China has always called on the two sides to conduct peace talks through peaceful means as soon as possible. From Figure 9 we can see that China abstained in the UN General Assembly vote to condemn Russia's attack on Ukraine. China abstained from other Russian votes on the Russia-Ukraine issue. This also means that China does not want to make too many remarks on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, because considering the friendly and cooperative relations with Russia, China does not want to stand in line, but only wants to have good relations with other countries. I think this is also the best proof that China is practicing the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

## 2.4 Conclusions

The Russo-Ukrainian war has had significant economic and political impacts on both the European Union and China. For the European Union, the war exposed its vulnerability to energy security due to its dependence on Russian gas. To mitigate this, the EU is taking steps to phase out imports of Russian oil and gas, but the process requires time, substantial investment, and political will. The war also strengthened European unity in supporting Ukraine and addressing the energy crisis, leading to tough economic sanctions on Russia and a desire for strategic autonomy. The EU's relationship with the United States and NATO has also been reaffirmed, although it aims to develop independent defense capabilities.

As for China, the war has affected its economy, particularly in terms of oil prices and its "One Belt, One Road" initiative. China's oil prices remained high since the outbreak of the conflict, impacting its energy costs. Additionally, the conflict hindered the advancement of the Belt and Road Initiative, as key routes pass through Russian territory, and investment projects with Russia and Ukraine faced restrictions. The war

also had implications for China's agricultural trade with Russia, affecting the export of agricultural products.

Politically, the war led to changes in international politics. For the European Union, it triggered shifts in neutral countries' attitudes, increased desire for strategic autonomy, and a revival of NATO's role. The EU's relationships with Western countries, especially in terms of reassessing relations with China, were also influenced by the war.

Regarding China's political impact, the country chose not to take sides in the conflict, maintaining its diplomatic stance of non-interference and peaceful resolution. China's abstention in UN General Assembly votes regarding the Russian attack on Ukraine reflects its effort to maintain friendly and cooperative relationships with both Russia and other nations.

In conclusion, the Russo-Ukrainian war had far-reaching consequences for both the European Union and China, influencing their economic strategies, energy security, political unity, and international relationships. The aftermath of the conflict continues to shape their actions and responses in the global arena.

## **PART 3**

### **COOPERATION AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE EU AND CHINA ON THE WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND UKRAINE**

#### **3.1 Cooperation measures between the two sides in the international arena.**

According to my research, the two sides actually have no cooperation on the issue of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and there are many differences. However, China has a lot of cooperation with some EU member states such as Germany and Greece.

China-EU relations began in 1985 with the China-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Since 2007, the two sides have been negotiating to upgrade the relationship to a new level of partnership, and there have been talks and agreements signed on more than 20 projects in the fields of environmental protection and education.

In the Belt and Road Initiative, Greece is regarded as the most stable bridgehead for cooperation with European countries in China's "One Belt, One Road" strategy. In 2009, after the debt crisis in Greece, China used its foreign exchange reserves to purchase and hold Greek government bonds, and then participated in the subscription of newly issued Greek government bonds.

China and Germany have also signed many cooperation agreements, such as the "Joint Statement on the Establishment of China-Germany All-round Strategic Partnership", "Sino-German Cooperation Action Plan: Co-shaping Innovation" and other cooperation agreements and statements.

China and the EU have reaffirmed their cooperation on financial regulation and other aspects, and agreed to work together on the reform of the World Trade Organization. In addition, the two sides also highlighted cooperation in areas such as green finance,

which is crucial to achieving their respective climate goals.(Hennessy 2023)

European heads of state have continued to focus on commercial interests in their relations with China, and the European Commission has also adopted a more confrontational stance, despite the deterioration in EU-China relations over the past few years. Therefore, the attitude of China-EU cooperation can be summed up as "should cooperate and should resist". Since 2019, the European Commission has viewed China as a partner, negotiating partner, economic competitor and institutional competitor.

Overall, although there are some differences and challenges in China-EU relations, the two sides still maintain a certain degree of cooperation and dialogue on the international stage, especially in the fields of economy, finance, and climate change.

### **3.2 Differences between the two sides on the issue of Ukraine and the reasons for them**

Above we mentioned the economic and political impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on China and the EU, as well as some international cooperation between China and the EU. However, in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the EU is the side that supports Ukraine, while China refuses to take sides. It neither clearly declares its support for Russia nor Ukraine, which leads to confusion and a little hostility in the EU's attitude towards China.

Look at how China does it. After the outbreak of the war, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately issued the document "China's Position on the Political Solution to the Ukraine Crisis". Crisis protection of civilians and prisoners of war, and cessation of unilateral sanctions.

First of all, after the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out, China's direction and solution have always been the focus of attention of the international community. After the

situation deteriorated, China has repeatedly called on the two sides to resolve the current dispute peacefully and avoid the conflict from turning into a larger-scale confrontation. While actively evacuating overseas Chinese, China has also provided emergency humanitarian aid to Uzbekistan. At the international level, China supports all efforts to ease the situation in Ukraine and achieve a political settlement, and opposes any actions that are not conducive to promoting a diplomatic solution, or even escalating the situation. China has stated on many occasions that it is willing to play a constructive role in promoting the relaxation of the situation in Ukraine, and is willing to make its own efforts to overcome the humanitarian crisis.

Second, after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the United States, Britain, Europe, Canada and other economies reached an agreement on prohibiting major Russian financial institutions from using the SWIFT system, and at the same time promised to impose sanctions on the Russian central bank's foreign exchange reserves. After the sanctions, Russia and China signed 15 cooperation agreements during the Beijing Winter Olympics. For example: "Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Russian Federation in the Field of Anti-monopoly Law Enforcement and Competition Policy", "Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Investment Cooperation in the Field of Sustainable (Green) Development" between the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation. and Russia decided to adopt RMB as cross-border payment settlement, Chinese financial institutions joined Russia's SPFS system and Russian financial institutions joined China's CIPS system. Sino-Russian cooperation has increased during the period of sanctions, and economic and trade exchanges between other economies and Russia may also be completed through China, which will help promote the internationalization of the RMB.

I think this is caused by the difference in values and concepts between the two sides. For a long time, the EU has been pursuing "based on respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the human rights of minorities", "The purpose of the establishment of the Union is to



promote peace and promote its value , to raise the level of happiness of its people". So at the beginning of the war, the European Union and its member states strongly condemned Russia's heinous attacks on Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporozh and Kherson regions. In addition, they condemned Belarus' participation in Russia's military aggression. To deal with the situation in Ukraine from multiple perspectives, the European Council and the Council of the European Union will hold regular meetings from February 2022. EU leaders have repeatedly urged Russia to immediately cease all military activities, withdraw all personnel and military equipment from Ukraine unconditionally, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence. They emphasized Ukraine's autonomy and praised the bravery of the Ukrainian people in protecting their country.

From the different approaches of the two, we can see the differences between China and the EU. The European Union has always emphasized that Russia is an aggressor, so it must strongly condemn and impose sanctions, but China has not stood by, and has always called on the two sides to conduct peace talks to stop the war.

However, both recognize the importance of each other and do not want a complete decoupling, but are taking steps to seek outside options.(Hennessy 2023)

Therefore, the relationship between China and Europe has both differences and cooperation, and the direction of development needs to be negotiated and balanced according to specific conditions and interests.

## **PART 4**

### **EU ATTITUDES AND RESPONSES TO CHINA'S ROLE IN THE WAR**

#### **4.1 EU's views on China's actions in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine**

On April 6, 2022, the European Union's foreign affairs department published an article on China's choices and responsibilities. Mention that China's attitude has always been pro-Russian neutral, and voted neutral in the UN General Assembly vote (we also mentioned this above). The EU believes that China does not use the term "war", preferring euphemisms such as problem, crisis or conflict. It rejects the use of sanctions. It prefers to share equal responsibility, rather than blaming Russia for aggression and pleading with "all parties" to find a way to end the bloodshed.

The European Union sees the war on Ukraine as a critical moment when countries must show their colors, but China believes it can avoid the choice of fate. As it stands, it argues that as Europe cuts its energy imports from Russia, it gets a Ukraine-focused West and a soft Russia, making China even more of a premium partner for cheap oil and gas.

The EU, for its part, called on China not only to support Ukraine's sovereignty and the need for a ceasefire in the abstract, but also to use its influence with Russia to help bring about a ceasefire and rule out any active military support for Russia. China insisted on a general statement of wanting to see peace and de-escalation, but avoided specific commitments on a ceasefire.

The EU believes that China should participate in any commission of inquiry initiated by the United Nations and must make its position known in one way or another.

The EU believes that the door should always be kept open to engage with China. Despite the well-known difficulties, it is important to recognize that it is in the mutual interest of China and the EU to manage this relationship in a responsible manner.

Climate change, biodiversity, and the growing threat of food insecurity in Africa or regional crises such as Afghanistan: these are topics on which the EU needs to work with China.

The purpose of foreign policy is to shape the choices of international actors. This also applies to China. For the EU, the best approach is to be realistic, firm and united. Diplomacy means talking to everyone, including those who disagree significantly with the EU.

#### **4.2 Suggest measures**

According to the EU's views on China in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on China and the EU according to the article, we can conclude that China's attitude is a principle of neutrality, but it has no actual actions. The EU is opposed to China's attitude, and hopes that China can turn its rhetorical appeal into practical actions and use its influence to help the EU resolve the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

Based on the above analysis, this paper believes that China and the EU can cooperate in the following aspects:

First, China and the EU need to be on the energy front. In order to reduce the risk, both parties should minimize their dependence. Europe needs to diversify its energy sources to reduce its dependence on Russian gas and oil.

Second, China and the EU should find a direction for cooperation on the Russia-Ukraine issue. China can maintain its neutral position, but it can provide humanitarian assistance to Ukraine, such as financial support and volunteers to go to the war to help.

Finally, China and the EU should abandon their previous inherent prejudices and use their international influence to urge Russia and Ukraine to cease fighting and organize an international meeting to discuss how to solve the current crisis and how to help

Ukraine rebuild its country in the future.

In short, the cooperation between China and the EU must continue, but the existing risks and challenges must also be dealt with. The two sides should jointly maintain ideals and fair competition, increase diversity, reduce dependence, and strengthen dialogue and exchanges on Russia-Ukraine issues. Only in this way can China-EU relations continue to develop.



## **PART 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

This individual study offers numerous important findings based on the examination of the EU's viewpoint on China's role in the Ukraine War and the future development of China-EU ties.

First off, the EU sees China's participation in the conflict in Ukraine with caution and suspicion. The EU is concerned that China would use its economic might to encourage Russian aggression and is working to end the issue via diplomatic discussion and negotiation.

Second, the EU is continuing working to strengthen collaboration with China despite their current tensions and difficulties. This may be done through promoting regional stability and sustainable development through multilateral institutions and international organizations.

Thirdly, as China-EU relations progress, new chances for cooperation should be explored while resolving existing issues and difficulties. It is important to improve areas like economic collaboration, scientific and technical exchanges, educational collaborations, trade liberalization, facilitation, and active multilateralism promotion. And last, it is essential to promote interpersonal and cultural interactions if we want to deepen friendship and understanding between the Chinese and European peoples. Such initiatives would help to maintain stable China-EU relations that are beneficial to both parties.

In conclusion, it can be said that the complicated connection between China and the EU constitutes an important bilateral partnership. To achieve shared growth, both parties must handle their differences and difficulties while putting collaboration first. Only by mutual respect, communication, and cooperation can China and the EU maintain stable ties and bring greater advantages to both peoples.

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## VITA

**NAME** Siyuan Yang

**DATE OF BIRTH** 17 Aug 2000

**PLACE OF BIRTH** BaoShan Yunnan province China

**INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED** Graduated School Chulalongkorn University

**HOME ADDRESS** No. 190, Guanfang Phase III, Longyang District, Baoshan City, Yunnan Province, China



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย  
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY