

## Overview

Technology has long been a major variable in state competition in history. Communications technology has been particularly powerful, both for business usage and for military usage, since the Roman, Mongolian, and British Empires. In 2000, Xi Jinping began to realize that technology would become a major part of China's journey to regain great power status and would enable it to surpass other great powers such as the United States. While many in the West still considered Informations Communications Technologies (ICT) as a commercial technology, Xi realized that "capturing the heights of the global economy" could be possible if China dominated these technologies, their standards, and their design. He implemented a number of policies between 2013 and 2021 – Digital Silk Road, Made in China 2025, AI Strategy, Outline for Innovation-Driven Growth, and so on to help China become the most powerful country in advanced technologies, a "Cyber Superpower". While the US was suspicious of these strategies, it was only during President Donald Trump that these fears – and the counter-measures – took priority over the political and economic aspects of the relationship.

## Objectives

- Highlight the origin of the current struggle with Xi Jinping's grand strategy dating back to 2000.
- Understand how the PRC views data and its central place in all of these technologies (5G, AI, semi-conductors, IPv6)
- Examine areas for greater cooperation in persuading China away from zero-sum thinking on technology.

## Recommended Readings

Frederick Kempe, "Op-ed: China is Testing a National Digital Currency – one Piece in Xi's Bid for Global Influence," CNBC, 23 May, 2020, available at: <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/23/op-ed-chinas-digital-currency-experience-part-of-xis-bid-for-influence.html>

“China bets big on \$2tn high tech infrastructure plan to spark economy”, Asia Nikkei, 1 June, 2020, available at: <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/China-tech/China-bets-on-2tn-high-tech-infrastructure-plan-to-spark-economy>

Francois Godement, et al, “The China Dream goes Digital: Technology in the Age of Xi”, European Council of Foreign Relations, 25 October, 2018, available at: [https://ecfr.eu/publication/the\\_china\\_dream\\_digital\\_technology\\_in\\_the\\_age\\_of\\_xi/](https://ecfr.eu/publication/the_china_dream_digital_technology_in_the_age_of_xi/)