

Weekly China Insight

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China voices strong concern over EU's proposed cybersecurity "de-risking" measures

On 21 January, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun responded to the European Commission proposed a new package of cybersecurity. Guo criticized the EU's approach as lacking factual evidence and relying on non-technical standards to restrict or exclude companies from the market, calling it a clear case of politicizing economic cooperation and overstretching the concept of security. China urged the EU to refrain from moving further down a protectionist path, stating that China would take necessary measures to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises if required.

The remarks reflect Beijing's firm opposition to the EU's evolving cybersecurity and supply-chain policies, which China views as politically motivated rather than technically justified. Going forward, this divergence is likely to add pressure to China-EU economic ties, especially in technology and digital infrastructure, and may prompt more assertive Chinese actions to defend its companies' interests in Europe.

China reaffirms support for the UN amid Trump's "Peace Committee" remarks

On 21 January, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun responded to U.S. President Donald Trump's comments that a newly announced "Peace Committee" could potentially replace the United Nations. Guo emphasized that China consistently practices true multilateralism and will firmly uphold the UN-centered international system, the international order based on international law, and the basic norms governing international relations rooted in the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

By reiterating its commitment to the UN as the core platform for global governance, Beijing is positioning itself as a defender of established multilateral institutions and rules-based international order.

China's 2025 GDP grows 5.0% as quarterly momentum moderates

On 19 January, China's National Bureau of Statistics released preliminary data showing that China's GDP in 2025 reached RMB 140 trillion, representing a 5.0% year-on-year increase in real terms. Quarterly growth eased through the year, with GDP expanding 5.4% in Q1, 5.2% in Q2, 4.8% in Q3, and 4.5% in Q4. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, GDP grew 1.2% in Q4.

Overall, the data points to resilience in headline growth, while highlighting the need to address underlying structural and cyclical pressures.

China sees December decline in youth unemployment rate, still higher than 2024

According to the National Bureau of Statistics on 22 January, the unemployment rate for 16–24-year-olds not in education fell to 16.5%, the lowest level in the second half of the year, while the rate for those aged 25–29 declined to 6.9%. Both figures, however, remained above December 2024 levels. By contrast, unemployment among prime-age workers (30–59) remained stable at 3.9%, underscoring the resilience of China's core urban labour force.

Seasonal improvements mask longer-term pressures from slower hiring, skills mismatches and the absorption of new graduates, suggesting that employment remains a key social and policy priority in 2026.