

EU and China discuss economic and trade relations at the 7th High-level Economic and Trade Dialogue

The discussions covered a range of strategic issues under the overall theme of “Harnessing Globalisation”. Topics included global economic governance, support for the multilateral trading system, trade and investment questions – notably negotiations on an investment agreement and on geographical indications – as well as the digital economy, climate and environmental cooperation, and connectivity.

The Dialogue was timely to prepare the upcoming EU China Summit that will take place in the Chinese capital. The meeting was co-chaired by Commission Vice-President Jyrki **Katainen** and Vice-Premier of the State Council Liu He, who is responsible for the relations with the EU and the US.

European Commission Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness Jyrki **Katainen** said: *“I am confident that the exchanges we have had with my new counterpart, Liu He, have been useful in paving the way towards a successful EU-China Summit in the economic and trade field. I am particularly pleased with the progress achieved in our investment negotiations and look forward to an exchange of offers at the Summit.”*

Both sides agreed to exchange market access offers at the upcoming Summit to give political impetus to an ambitious EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, both in terms of investment liberalisation and protection.

The EU and China jointly expressed support for the rules-based multilateral trading system with World Trade Organisation (WTO) at its centre. The EU and China agreed to set up a working group to concretely co-operate on reform to help the WTO meet new challenges and to further develop rules in key areas relevant for the global level playing field, such as industrial subsidies.

China confirmed its commitment to acceding to the WTO Government Procurement Agreement (GPA). The EU sought assurances from China that it will negotiate its accession to the GPA on the basis of an ambitious and comprehensive offer.

Vice President **Katainen** received the commitment from Liu He to accelerate work on an agreement on Geographical Indications with a view to ensuring an announcement at the Summit.

He also urged China to tackle overcapacity in sectors such as steel and aluminium, and to prevent overcapacity in other areas, including high-tech sectors covered by the Made in China 2025 strategy.

The discussions at the HED took both sides closer to finding a solution for expanding market access for certain meat products such as beef and poultry.

Both co-chairs agreed to work closely to address their respective priority market access barriers.

At the upcoming Summit, the EU and China indicated that they would be ready to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Circular Economy, an MoU for an Emissions Trading System and an Oceans' Partnership that includes fisheries.

Finally, both sides discussed connectivity – taking stock of progress in the EU-China Connectivity Platform – and exchanged views on the digital economy, including how to avoid introducing market access barriers through their respective cybersecurity regulations.

For More Information

[EU-China trade relations](#)