



YOUNG CHINA
WATCHERS
Pulse

Young China Watchers 2024 Pulse on China



About the Report

This report is the fourth edition of Young China Watchers' regular China survey. The survey has two aims: to provide a snapshot of opinions held by young professionals engaged with China and to understand how those opinions can change over time. Respondents are mostly early- to mid-career China watchers. Changes in their opinions on China have the potential to impact investment, relationships, and more as they progress through their careers.

2024's Pulse Survey presents survey responses gathered between January 12 and March 2, 2024 from 316 members of YCW's ten chapters across Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America, from our online and mentorship communities, as well as other young China watchers around the world.

This edition is conducted against the backdrop of an increasingly polarized public discourse around China, and it is the third report to include comparisons over time, providing insight into shifts in opinion over the years since the first survey was conducted. For the China watching community, this period saw geographical dispersal, increased difficulty in travel to China, and an increase in online-only events, all of which serve to color the insights and views represented in the survey. The structure of the questions has remained largely consistent over the four reports but minor adjustments have been made to reflect new, topical issues. For example, 2024 tweaks reflect the importance of climate change to geopolitics, as well as the advent and proliferation of artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT. Finally, we have added a question on news sources, which is pertinent given the polarization of viewpoints. That said, the main body of questions remains consistent so that changes in sentiment can be tracked over time.

The survey results showcase the diversity of our global community — in demographics, experiences and perspectives on China. Our hope is to explore these views over time and provide on-the-ground insights from the YCW community by keeping a pulse on China in the years to come.

Recommended citation: Young China Watchers. (2024). Young China Watchers 2024 Pulse on China.

Authors: Michael Yip | Laura Bonsaver | Emily Hemmings | Clement Ngu

Editors: Emily Brignand | Robert Postings | Kit Mention | Kathy Song

Data privacy: Data privacy was a first-order priority for YCW in conducting the survey. All responses have been securely stored and handled in confidence. To enhance the level of anonymization, we have removed a significant number of personal questions and no longer mandated a response to such questions. We also committed to deleting all personally identifiable information three months after survey closure. Finally, to maintain data aggregation, demographic questions were made generic and findings have only been published in summarized form, with no personally identifiable information.

Statistical note: 79 responses to the survey were removed from analysis as they were incomplete. Please note that some figures, graphs and illustrations may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank our partner organisations for their support: King's College London, Pacific Forum, SupChina, and Asia Society.

Table of Contents

About the Report	1
Table of Contents	3
Executive Summary	4
Key Findings	5
1. China and the World	6
A marginally positive shift in viewpoints concerning China's impact on global affairs	6
Competitor, enemy, or partner?	7
China as an economic, military, cultural, and governing power	7
Less confidence in China as an economic and political model	9
Strong opinions regarding China's impact on technology and human rights	10
Climate collaboration instills optimism, while AI collaboration prompts suspicion	11
China expected to emerge as the most influential actor in the Asia Pacific region	11
Global opinions and media representation of China are unfair	11
How are negative perceptions of China impacting Young China Watchers personally?	12
2. China's Foreign Investment	14
Belt and Road Initiative continued to divide respondents	14
National security concerns rise alongside Chinese investments	16
3. China's Domestic Agenda	17
Weakened confidence in China's state capacity	17
Attitudes toward changes in Chinese society turn negative	19
Improved confidence in Chinese technology and innovation in China	20
4. Conclusion	21
5. About Young China Watchers	22
Our Core Activities	22
Projects & Initiatives	22
Join Us	22

Executive Summary

To reflect the views of young China watchers around the world, and chart them over time, YCW carried out its fourth survey of sentiments toward China in 2024, following previous The Pulse reports from 2018, 2019, and 2021. This survey was conducted as the world grappled with pressing global challenges, including renewed conflicts and the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI); at the same time, China was working to evolve its image following the end of the COVID-19 era.

Survey data show that within the Young China Watchers community, views towards China remained mixed, suggesting that in 2024, respondents approach China with a mix of hope and scepticism.

In some areas, responses are more optimistic than in previous years. While still divided, perspectives on China's impact on global affairs are marginally warmer than in our last survey; also, more respondents agreed that China was a responsible stakeholder on the world stage. Respondents felt generally confident that China is doing its fair share in combating the climate crisis.

On the other hand, responses show general pessimism about China's impact on human rights, peace and security, and international institutions and law. Increasing numbers of respondents saw Chinese outward direct investment (ODI) as impacting their national security. Despite confidence in China's ability to innovate, most respondents were not confident that China would be able to collaborate with the US and its allies to safely develop AI. Regarding China's domestic agenda, respondents were less confident in China's ability to withstand economic shock, and were less confident than before regarding China's viability as an economic or political model.

One unifying position among respondents around the world was an assertion that China is unfairly portrayed by the general public and by the media.

Read the full report for further detailed insights on how China is perceived by the China watcher community.

Key Findings

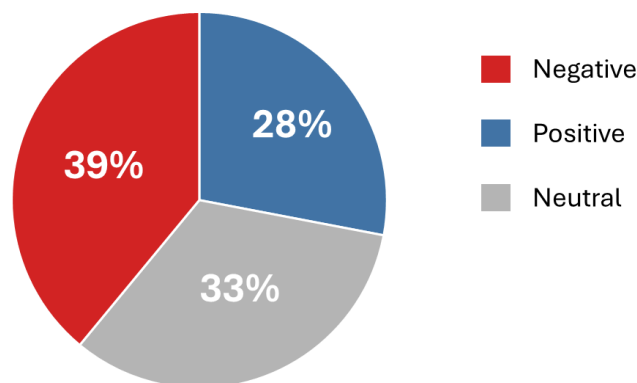
1. **Respondents felt marginally more positive about China's impact on global affairs:** Respondents viewed China's impact on global affairs as mixed. However, fewer respondents than in previous Pulse surveys expressed a "negative" or "strongly negative" stance, with net negative decreasing from 43% in 2021 to 39% in 2024.
2. **Weakened confidence in China's economic model:** Respondents showed reduced confidence in China's economic model compared to previous years (a 7% decrease in agreement since 2021). 32% believe that China will successfully avoid a significant financial or economic shock over the next five years, a significant decline from 59% in 2021.
3. **2024's top three issues:** Economic development, peace, and technology emerged as key concerns shaping respondents' perceptions of China's role on the global stage.
4. **Strong opinions regarding China's impact on technology and human rights:** Respondents expressed notably positive views regarding China's influence on technology and innovation (70% net positive) and the environment (51% net positive). They were pessimistic about China's impact on human rights (79% net negative) and peace and security (57% net negative).
5. **Respondents believed global opinions and media representation of China are unfair:** 63% of respondents disagreed that the public opinion towards China is fair and 67% of respondents disagreed that media coverage of China is fair. This perception has strengthened since 2019 and remains relatively consistent globally, with notably strong disagreement observed in China, the UK, and the US.
6. **Views on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)'s impact on economic development remain polarized:** Regional differences in responses to whether the BRI will significantly improve the economic development of participating countries are significant, with respondents from Mainland China exhibiting the highest level of positivity (54% average net agreement), while US respondents exhibited the lowest level of positivity (28% net agreement).
7. **Respondents agreed that the BRI and Chinese overseas direct investment will impact participating countries:** Respondents anticipate that the BRI will notably bolster China's political influence globally, while also voicing apprehensions about the potential impact of Chinese ODI on national security in participating countries.
8. **Confidence in Chinese technology and innovation grows while views of healthcare and social welfare systems cool:** While 72% of respondents maintain a positive outlook on the progress of technology and innovation, confidence in China's healthcare and social welfare systems has waned. Only 34% expressed positivity, an 18% decrease from 2021.

1. China and the World

A marginally positive shift in viewpoints concerning China's impact on global affairs

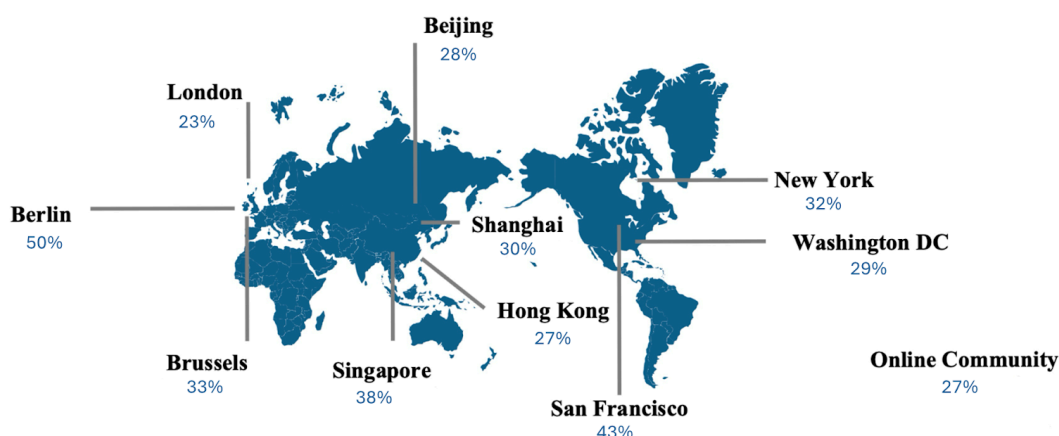
Perception of China's impact on global affairs is mixed: respondents were evenly divided on whether China's impact is positive, negative, or neutral, albeit with a slight leaning towards the negative option. Still, fewer respondents than in years past expressed a "negative" or "strongly negative" stance, with the net negative decreasing from 43% in 2021 to 39% in 2024. Concurrently, more respondents than before were "positive" or "strongly positive" (net positive rising from 24% in 2021 to 28% in 2024).

China's impact on global affairs



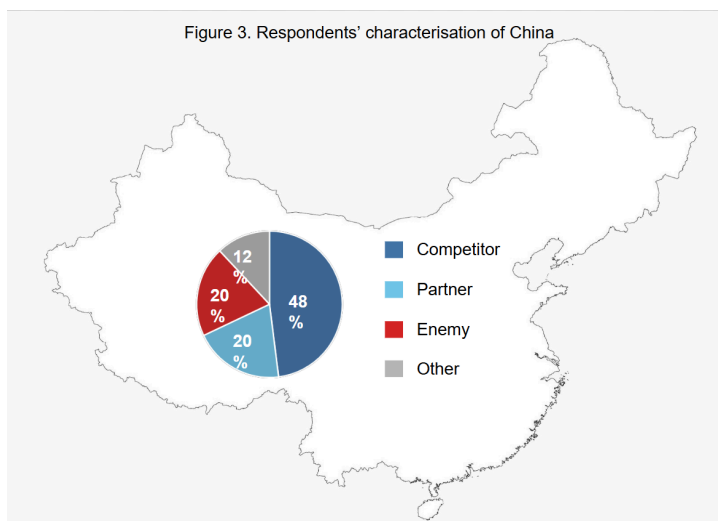
Looking beyond the overarching picture, chapters expressed divergent viewpoints. Respondents in Washington, DC expressed a little more positivity towards China's impact on global affairs (net positive 29%, up from 17% in 2021). The same is true for Brussels (net positive 33%, up from 30% in 2021) and New York (net positive 32%, up from 25% in 2021). On the other hand, respondents in Singapore were more negative, with net positivity declining to 38% (down from 47% in 2021), marking a decrease from 47% in 2021. Overall, respondents in Berlin were the most positive of all chapters regarding China's impact on global affairs (net positive 50%).

Chapter responses: Positive: China's impact on global affairs



Competitor, enemy, or partner?

Views on whether China is a competitor, enemy, or partner have remained stable since 2021. In 2024, almost half of respondents (48%) perceived China as a “competitor,” while 20% identified China as an “enemy” and 20% as a “partner.” Notably, respondents who viewed China as a “partner” grew by 5% since 2019. Of those who voted “partner,” 50% were in Singapore.



A non-negligible number of respondents felt that China could not be characterised as only a competitor, enemy, or partner. In the free-text answers, these respondents suggested that China was a composite of the three options.

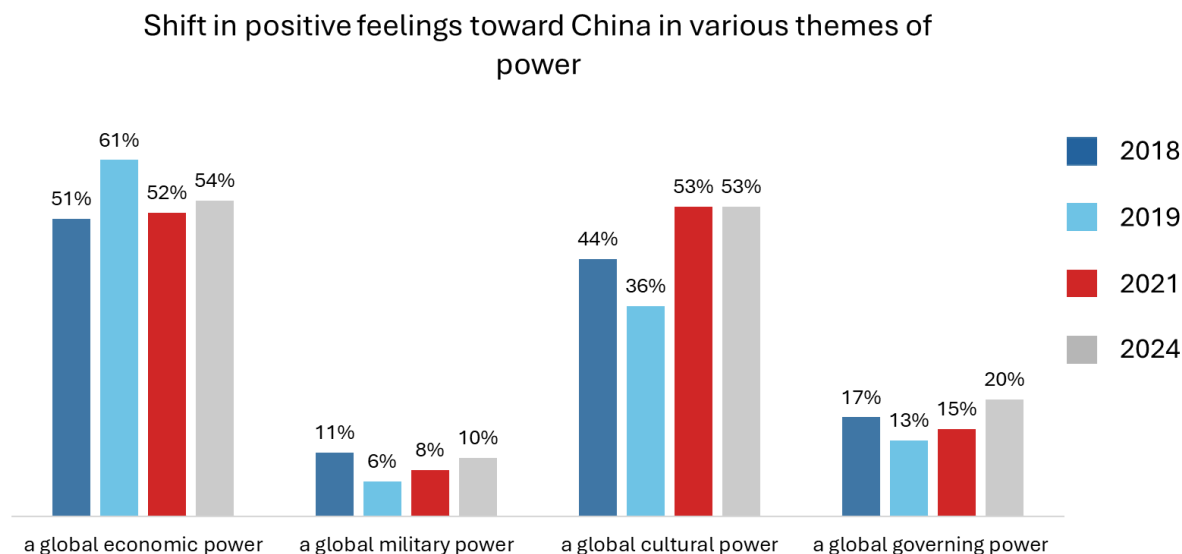
“A mix of all three depending on the policy area.”
 “Partner and competitor [who] needs to be wisely approached.”

China as an economic, military, cultural, and governing power

Respondents' views on China as an economic, military, cultural, or governing power were mixed, conforming with prior Pulse surveys. In 2024, just over half of respondents held either positive or strongly positive views about China as an economic power. Meanwhile, negative and strongly negative views on China as a military and governing power prevailed (Military power: 63% net negative; Governing power: 51% net negative). Respondents in Brussels and Washington, DC expressed the most negative sentiments regarding China as a military power. In Brussels, 75% cast their votes as negative or strongly negative, and in Washington, DC, 83%. In contrast, respondents in Singapore and Hong Kong maintained a notably more neutral stance.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative
...a global economic power?	54%	26%	20%
...a global military power?	10%	26%	63%
...a global cultural power?	53%	33%	13%
...a global governing power?	20%	31%	50%

Respondents' views on China as an economic, military, or cultural power were largely stable in previous pulse surveys. However, those views did experience a slight global uptick in positivity in 2024. On average, more respondents than before viewed China as a military power positively, with net positive votes progressing from 8% in 2021 to 10% in 2024. The most notable shift surfaced in respondents' assessments of China as a governing power: the number of respondents holding negative views or strongly negative views reduced by 10% and, concurrently, respondents expressing a positive or strongly positive appraisal grew by 3%. In conclusion, this year's perspectives exhibit a somewhat tempered level of negativity.



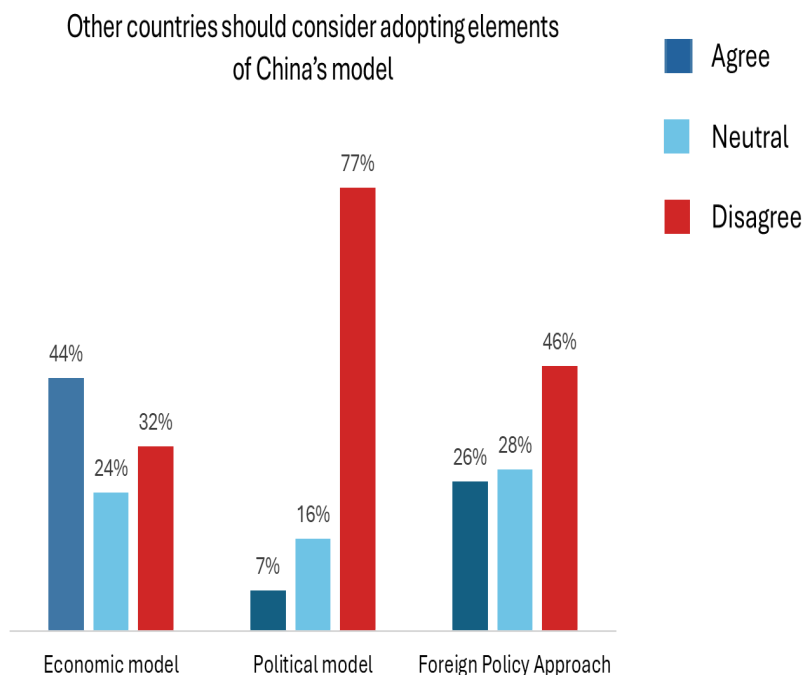
To contextualise these developments, the Pulse survey in 2021 was conducted during a period marked by pervasive negative portrayals of China in the media and political spheres, primarily fuelled by China's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ Between 2021 and 2024, opinions subtly yet discernibly diversified, resulting in a more balanced outlook reminiscent of attitudes observed in 2019.

¹ Laura Silver, Kat Devlin, and Christine Huang (2020). Unfavorable Views of China Reach Historic Highs in Many Countries. Pew Research Center. Available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/10/06/unfavorable-views-of-china-reach-historic-highs-in-many-countries/>

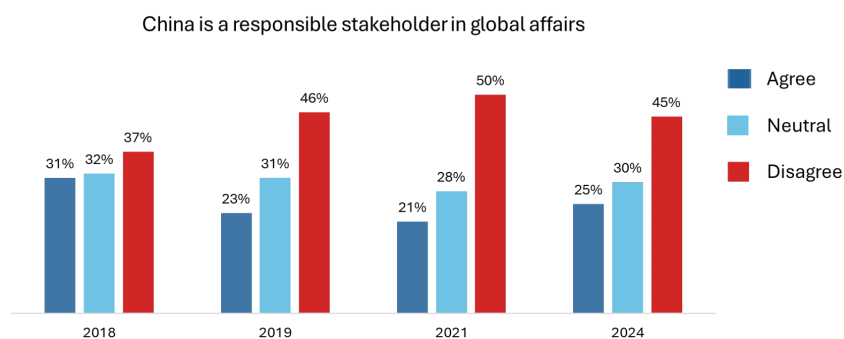
Less confidence in China as an economic and political model

Amidst slowing economic and productivity growth in China, respondents were less confident than before regarding China's viability as an economic or political model. 43% of respondents agreed that other countries should adopt elements of China's economic model, marking a decrease from 50% in 2021.

A drop in confidence in China's political model was also observed. 7% agreed that elements of China's political system should be adopted by others, a decrease from 13% in 2021. 77% disagreed, representing a 10% increase from 67% in 2021. Meanwhile, more respondents than before were positive (26% net positive on adoption of aspects of China's foreign policy approach, an increase from 18% in 2021). There was also a notable downturn in disagreement, with net disagreement decreasing from 59% to 46%. This correlates with a recent reduction in China's notably more assertive "Wolf Warrior" foreign policy approach, particularly at its height around 2020-2021².



25% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that China acts as a responsible stakeholder (a rise from 22% in 2021), while 45% disagreed or strongly disagreed (a drop from 50% in 2021). In terms of confidence in China's ability to project power globally, 45% acknowledged its growing effectiveness in projecting soft power, while 63% expressed the same regarding the projection of hard power.



² Peter Martin (2021). Understanding Chinese "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy." The National Bureau of Asian Research. Available at: <https://www.nbr.org/publication/understanding-chinese-wolf-warrior-diplomacy/>

The economy, peace, and technology: this year's top three issues

Notable shifts have occurred in the factors that most significantly influenced respondents' perceptions of China since the last survey. In 2024, respondents felt that the three most relevant issues shaping their view of China were "Economic development" (59%), "Peace and security," (47%), and "Technology and innovation" (46%). Against the backdrop of developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the resulting debate on how it should be regulated, the group of respondents influenced by "Technology and innovation" grew from 16% in 2021 to 46% in 2024. This marks a significant departure from the previous Pulse survey in 2021, where "Human rights" (26%) and "Global health" (20%) claimed the top positions.

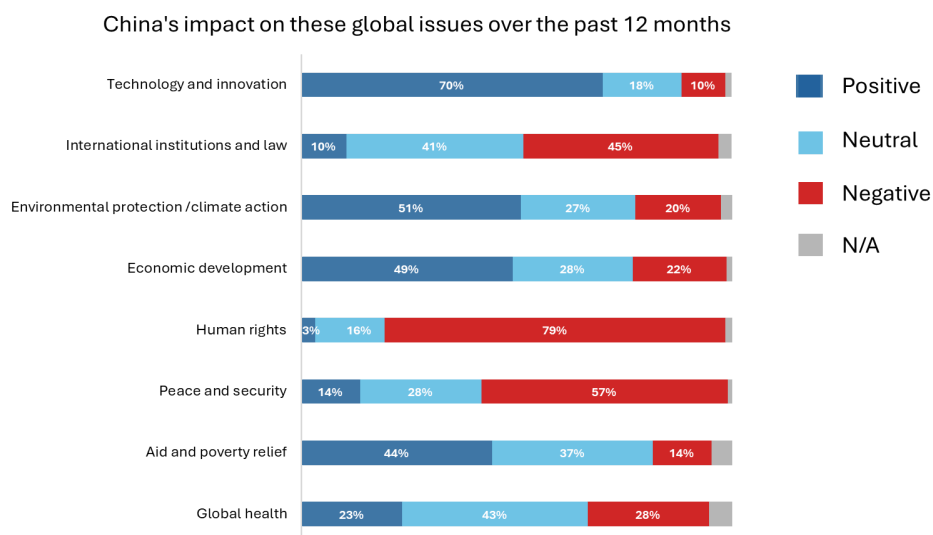
	Economic development	59%
	Peace and security	47%
	Technology and innovation	46%

Meanwhile, amidst escalating tensions in the Taiwan Strait and concerns regarding cyber attacks originating from China, respondents reported a heightened focus on "Peace and security" (47% in 2024, up from 24% in

2021). Furthermore, more respondents than before also indicated the importance of "Environmental protection and climate action" in how they form their China viewpoints: rising from a mere 7% in 2021 to 23% in 2024.

Strong opinions regarding China's impact on technology and human rights

When respondents were asked to assess China's impact on these global issues over the past 12 months, diverse and polarised opinions emerged. Respondents held predominantly positive sentiments regarding China's influence on "Technology and innovation" (70% positive), "Environmental protection/climate action" (51% positive), and "Economic development" (almost half, 49%). Contrastingly, respondents voiced pessimism regarding China's impact on "Human rights" (79% negative), "Peace and security" (57% negative), and finally, "International institutions and law" (45% negative).

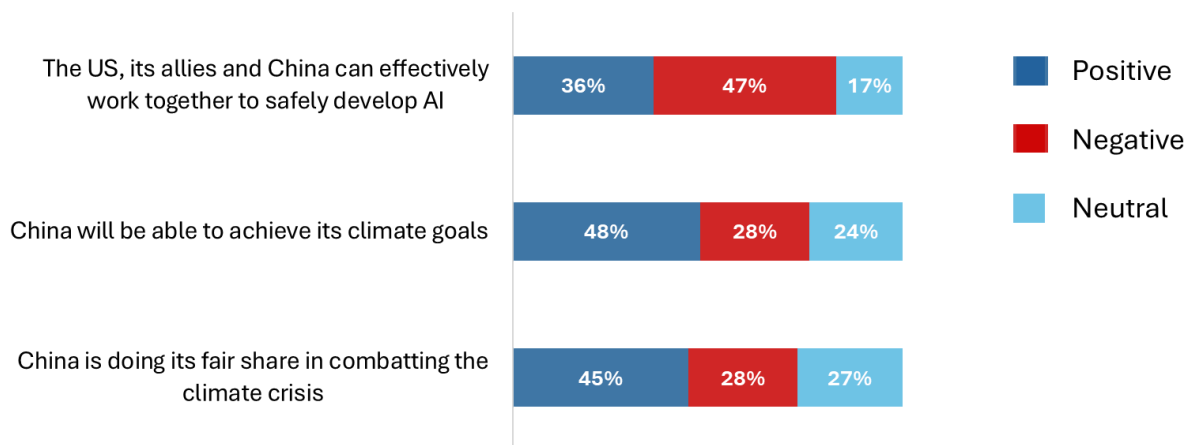


Climate collaboration instills optimism, while AI collaboration prompts suspicion

In 2024's Pulse survey, participants were presented with new questions connected to AI development and the climate. 45% felt positive that China is doing its fair share in combating the climate crisis (with 28% holding a negative view). This positive sentiment was particularly notable in New York (53%) and Beijing (56%).

Similarly, 48% of respondents expressed optimism about China's ability to attain its climate goals, including peaking carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060.

In contrast, respondents were less positive about China's endeavors in AI. 35% feel positive about the prospect of the US, its allies, and China effectively collaborating for the secure development of AI, while 47% feel negatively. The most negative sentiment was expressed by respondents in Washington, DC (59%).



China expected to emerge as the most influential actor in the Asia Pacific region

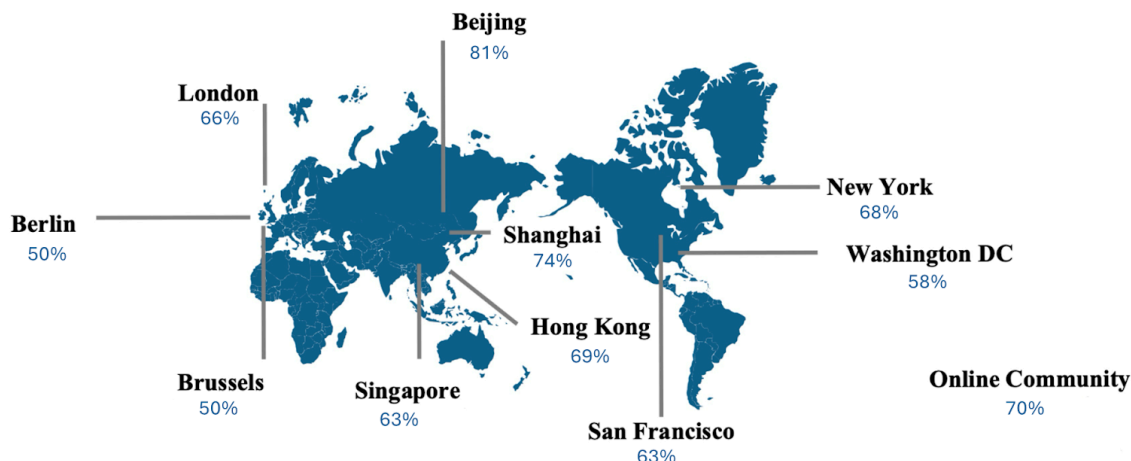
Looking ahead, most respondents anticipated China will emerge as the frontrunner to wield the greatest influence in the Asia Pacific region over the coming five years (79%). The United States was in second place at 20%, while ASEAN claimed 6% of the vote share.

Global opinions and media representation of China are unfair

Despite the pessimism regarding some areas of China's global impact, a majority of respondents asserted that China is unfairly portrayed by the media. This perception gained traction since 2019. Notably, 67% of respondents deemed media coverage of China as unjust, marking an increase from 63% in 2021. The chapters with the most notable disagreements were Beijing, where 81% of respondents believed media representation of China to be unfair, and Shanghai, where the figure was 74%. Many in New York (68%) and London (66%) also disagreed that media representation of China was fair.

A majority of respondents also believed that public opinion towards China is unfair (63%). This majority grew by 5% from 58% in 2021. Finally, 38% of respondents perceived international government policies towards China as unfair, reflecting a modest increase from 34%.

Chapter responses: Disagree: Media coverage toward China is fair



How are negative perceptions of China impacting Young China Watchers personally?

Respondents commented on the adverse effects that growing negative global perceptions of China are having on them individually.

Through free-text responses, two prominent themes emerged, revealing the personal concerns of this community in response to China's evolving global role amid geopolitical tensions. The first theme concerns the rising apprehension among respondents outside of China with Chinese heritage, who express growing concerns about the potential rise of xenophobic biases directed towards them.

“It certainly makes it harder to be an American who can showcase his Chinese heritage and pride in Chinese culture, history, and people without making it clear that I draw a strong distinction between Chinese culture and people and the CCP regime. It saddens me to see American politicians, media outlets, and people look upon people from China or Americans of Chinese descent with suspicion.”

“As a British Born Chinese, the negative views of China also negatively impacts me and my family which makes us feel unwelcome in a country which is and always has been our home.”

The second theme relates to professional worries, as respondents express concerns about how the world's overly negative depictions of China may influence the perception of their expertise in the field.

As someone living in China, how Chinese engages with countries beyond its borders fundamentally changes how I am perceived when/if I return to work in other countries. This is increasingly negative, and is likely to intensify over coming years. Although China skills are increasingly necessary, they are increasingly viewed with suspicion.

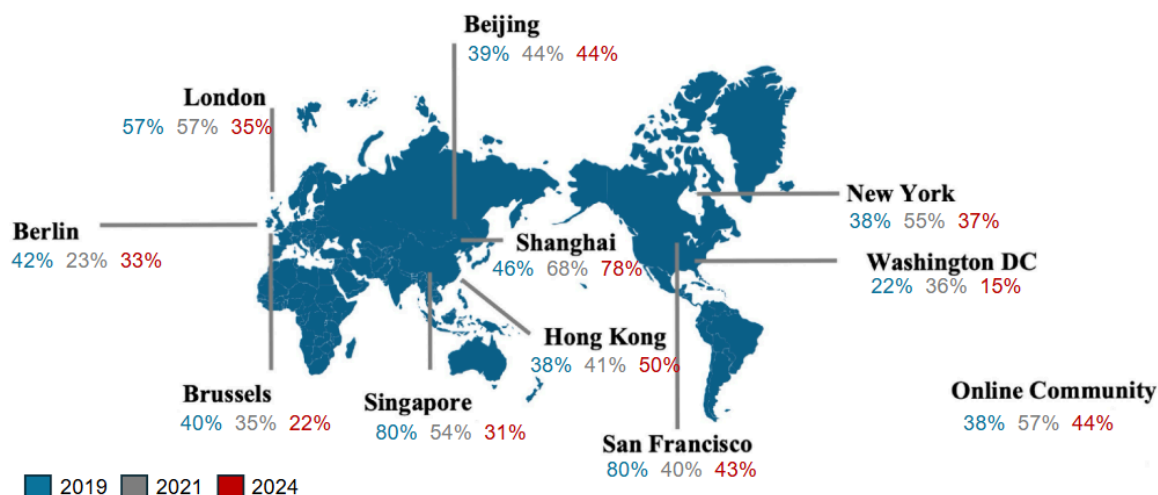
These nuanced and personal perspectives suggest that country-level perceptions of China can have personal repercussions.

2. China's Foreign Investment

In 2023, China's outward direct investment reached US\$147.9 billion, with Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries receiving a significant boost of US\$31.8 billion, reflecting a 22.6% increase.³ Marking the BRI's 10th anniversary, China highlighted its US\$1 trillion investment across 146 member countries,⁴ with Xi Jinping emphasizing its role in enhancing global connectivity in trade, capital, technology, and people.⁵

Belt and Road Initiative continued to divide respondents

Figure 1. Chapter Responses: Agreement that the BRI will significantly improve participant countries' economies



Views on whether the BRI will significantly improve the economic development of participating countries remained stable and have not deviated much from the first Pulse Survey. Whereas 44% of respondents agree or strongly agreed with this statement in 2019, increasing to a peak of 49% in 2021, such respondents in 2024 accounted for 38%.

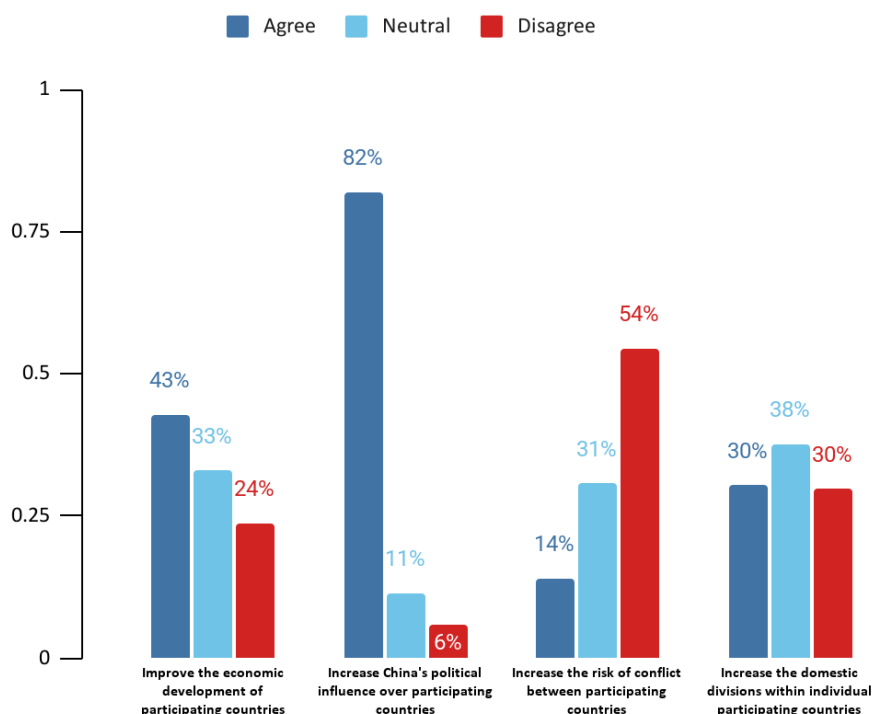
³ EY (2023) Overview of China outbound investment of 2023, available at: https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_cn/topics/coin/ey-overview-of-china-outbound-investment-of-2023-bilingual.pdf (accessed 17th March 2024)

⁴ Nedopil, Christoph (2024) China Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Investment Report 2023, Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University (Brisbane) and Green Finance & Development Center, FISF Fudan University (Shanghai), available at: https://greenfdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Nedopil-2024_China-BRI-Investment-Report-2023.pdf (accessed 17th March 2024)

⁵ MFA (2023) Xi Jinping Attends the Opening Ceremony of the Third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation and Delivers a Keynote Speech, October 18th 2023, available at: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/202310/t20231026_11168842.html (accessed 2nd March 2024)

Regional differences in responses to this question were significant, indicating positivity about the BRI is mostly found in China: 54% of respondents from YCW chapters in Mainland China agreed that BRI would improve economic development. In contrast, only 28% of respondents from YCW chapters in the USA, and 33% of respondents from YCW chapters in Europe agreed.

Figure X. China's BRI will significantly:



The vast majority of respondents (82%) agreed that BRI will significantly increase China's political influence over participating countries, with little variation between regions.

Few respondents (14%) believed that the BRI will significantly increase the potential outbreak of conflict between participating countries. A significant minority of respondents (30%) however, thought that participation in BRI may significantly increase internal divisions within participating countries, with little variation in responses to this question between YCW chapters.

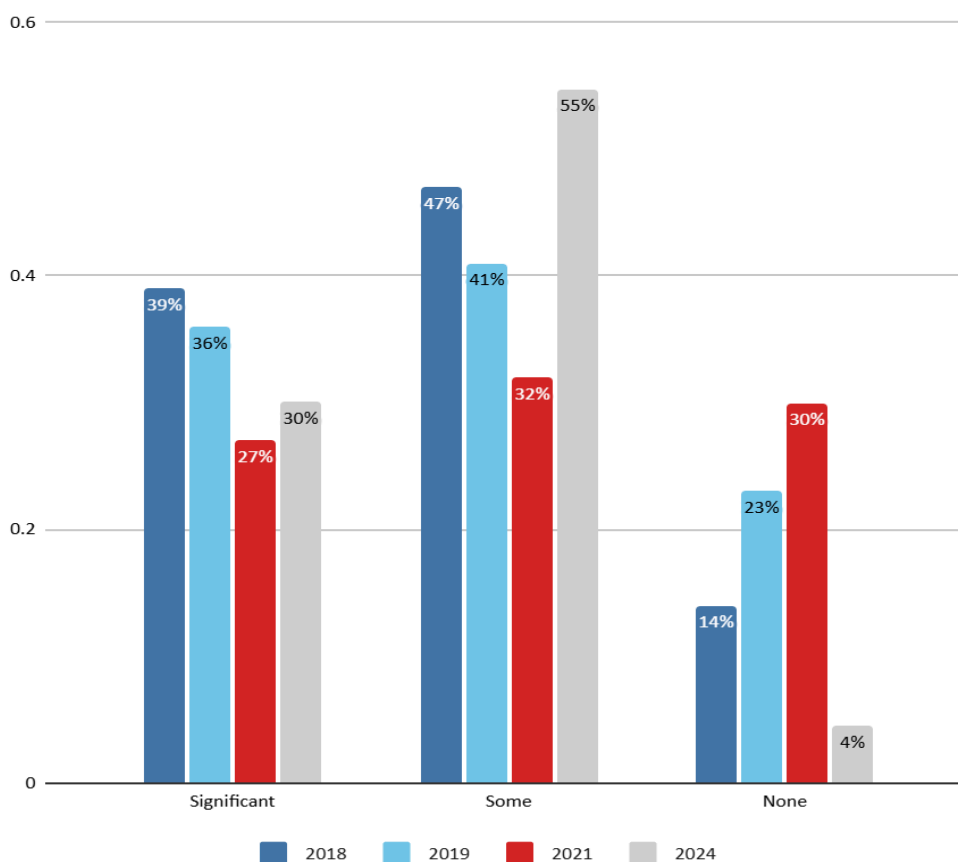
Moving beyond BRI, the Pulse survey asked respondents how they would characterize the impact of Chinese investments where they live. Responses were varied, with the largest group (40%) indicating neutrality. The next largest group (32%) of respondents indicated that they would characterize the impact of Chinese investment as "positive" or "very positive", compared to only 16% who characterised it as "negative" or "very negative." Perhaps surprisingly, respondents from the USA and Europe were slightly more positive about the impact of Chinese

investment than those from chapters in Mainland China (Europe: 23%; USA: 32%; Mainland China 21%).

Respondents' attitudes toward Chinese investment where they live have become less positive since the first Pulse survey in 2018, in which 49% of respondents indicated they would characterise the impact of Chinese investment where they live as "positive" or "very positive". Results for 2019 and 2021 were 38% and 31%, respectively.

National security concerns rise alongside Chinese investments

Figure X. Extent of impact of Chinese investments on national security of your country



Respondents were asked to judge to what extent Chinese investment was impacting national security where they live. Only 4% of respondents thought it had no impact. This is a sharp decrease from 2021, when 30% of respondents believed there are no national security impacts from Chinese investments in their region. The largest group at 55% suggested it was "somewhat significant" and finally 30% felt it was "significant".

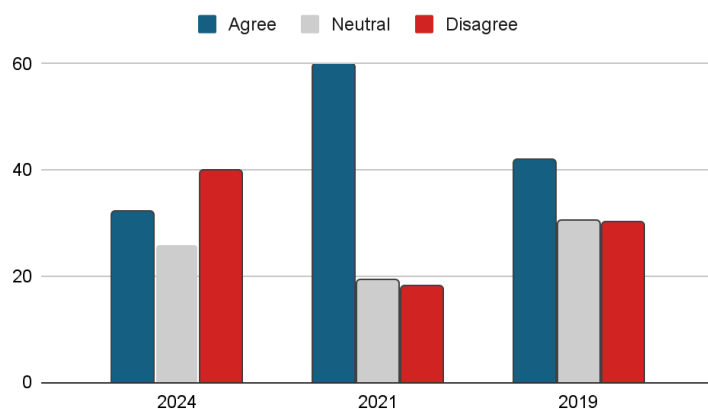
Respondents from the USA and European YCW chapters were more likely to hold this view (combined results - Europe: 70%; USA: 75%; Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore: 20%). Respondents characterising the impact on national security as either “significant” or “very significant” have remained between 30-40% over the four YCW Pulse Surveys.

3. China's Domestic Agenda

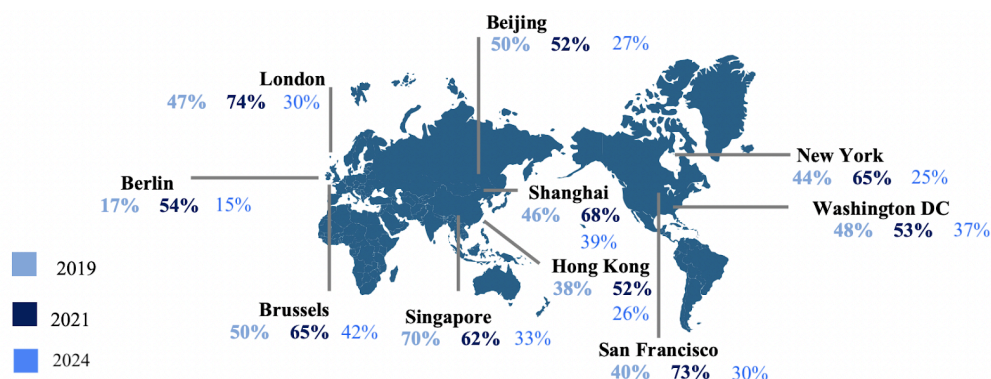
Following two years of strict zero-COVID rules and a bumpy economic recovery, respondents were less confident in China's ability to withstand economic shock and to implement its policy agenda. While confidence in China's ability to innovate remains strong, positivity in other areas of Chinese society has weakened.

Weakened confidence in China's state capacity

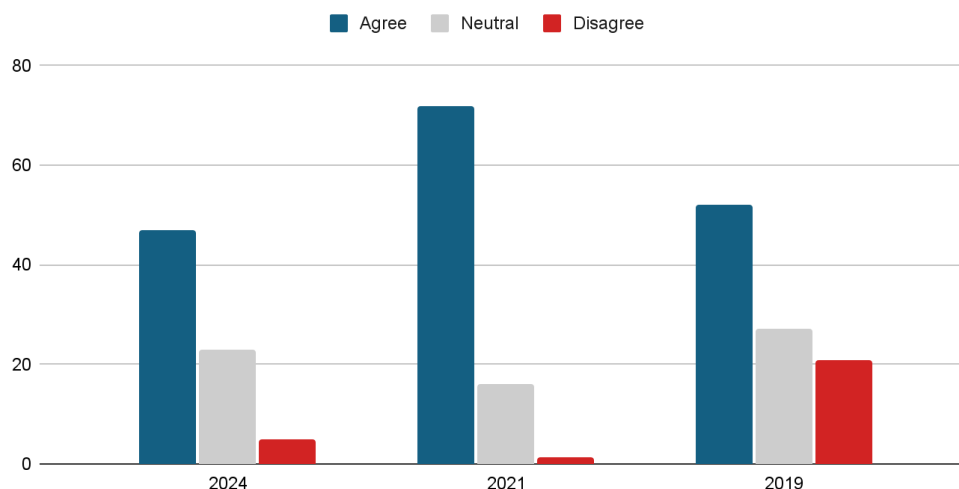
Figure 20a. China will successfully avoid significant financial or economic shock over the next five years



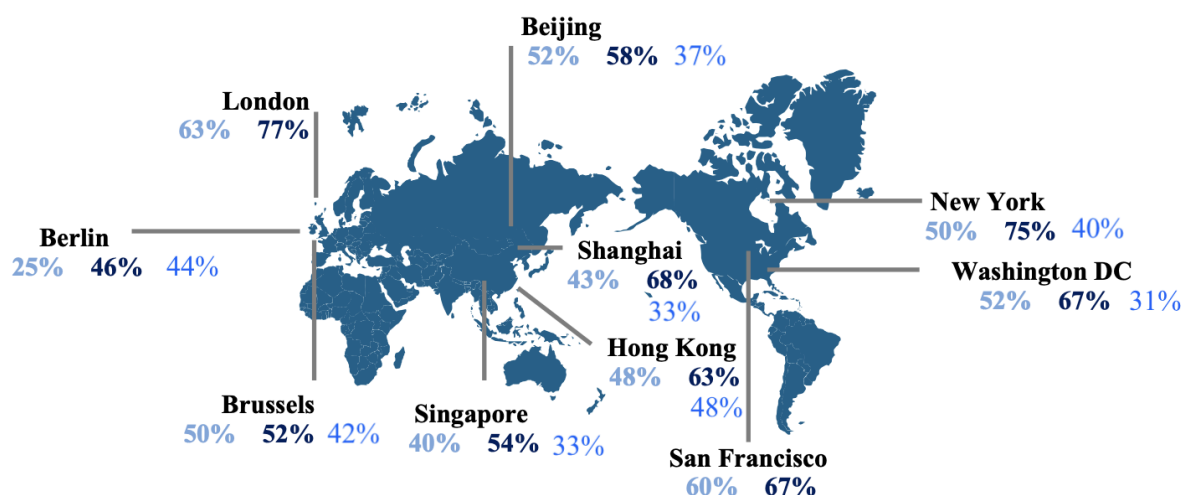
Amidst an uneven economic recovery, only a third of respondents (32%) believed that China will successfully avoid a significant financial or economic shock over the next five years. This marks a significant decline from 59% in 2021. Our chapters in Asia continued to be the least optimistic: Hong Kong (26%), Beijing (27%), Singapore (33%); while responses in European capitals (Brussels, 42%) and American capitals (Washington DC, 37%) held a more positive view.



Attitudes toward the direction in which aspects of Chinese society have turned negatively

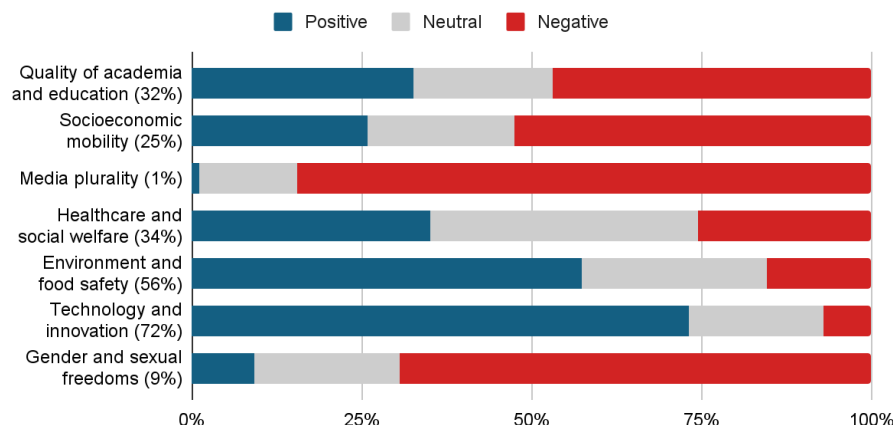


Against the backdrop of ongoing bankruptcies in the real estate sector, confidence among our respondents in the Chinese government's ability to implement its policy agenda in the five years from 2024 declined by 15% compared with our 2021 survey. Less than half (47%) of respondents agreed that the Chinese government would be able to achieve its policy aims, while 22% expressed disagreement, a significant increase from 9% recorded in 2021. While chapters outside Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong exhibited more confidence in our previous survey, there has been a sharp decline in 2024, among them: London (-31%); New York (-35%), Washington DC (-36%); San Francisco (-42%).



Attitudes toward changes in Chinese society turn negative

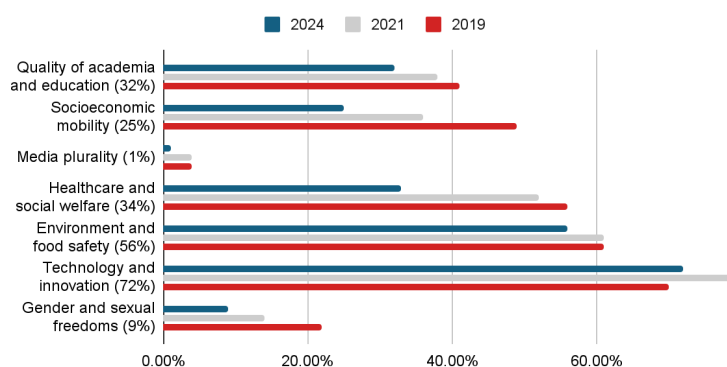
Figure 22 Attitudes toward the direction in which aspects of Chinese society have turned negative



Most respondents continued to perceive technology and innovation (72%) and environment and food safety (56%) as progressing in a positive direction, although both saw slight declines. Conversely, attitudes toward healthcare and social welfare underwent the most notable shift, with an 18% decrease (from 52% to 34%) in positive attitudes. This suggests that despite initial success in containing the pandemic, confidence in healthcare and social welfare has become a minority. This shift was particularly evident among our chapters in Brussels (26% positive), Washington, DC (23% positive), and San Francisco (12.5% positive).

Meanwhile, there were growing doubts over the future direction of Chinese socioeconomic mobility. Respondents perceiving a negative trajectory grew from 33% to 51%. This reflects that the COVID-19 pandemic created a sustained impact on both China's economic outlook. Attitudes towards the future direction of media plurality remain least favourable, at 85% net negative, while these positive views have fallen from 4% to below 1%. Following a 12% rise in negative attitudes towards gender and sexual freedoms in our previous survey, the figure increased by another 13% to 68%. Overall, Singapore remains the most positive towards domestic trends within China, whereas US chapters are the least optimistic.

Figure 23. Direction in which aspects of Chinese society are changing



Improved confidence in Chinese technology and innovation in China

Technology and innovation was the only area, among other domestic issues, where respondents' attitudes remained stable compared with the last Pulse survey. Our 2024 survey found that 35% of participants indicated that China is better at innovating than Western countries, similar to that of 2021 (39%). This was

reflected again in our question on the ability of Chinese companies to compete in global markets with Western counterparts. Those who believe that Chinese companies perform better are at 35%, while those who hold a negative view are 29%. Both views are broadly in line with the results from 2021, which were 34% and 26%, respectively.

Figure 24. Ability of China to innovate compared to Western countries

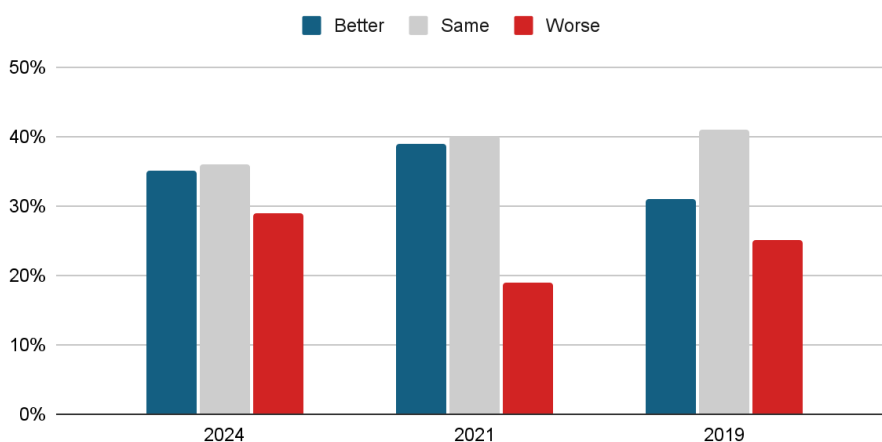
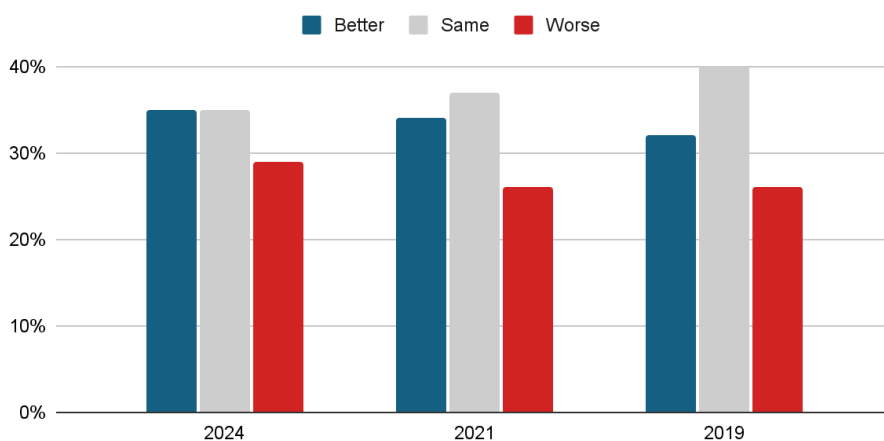


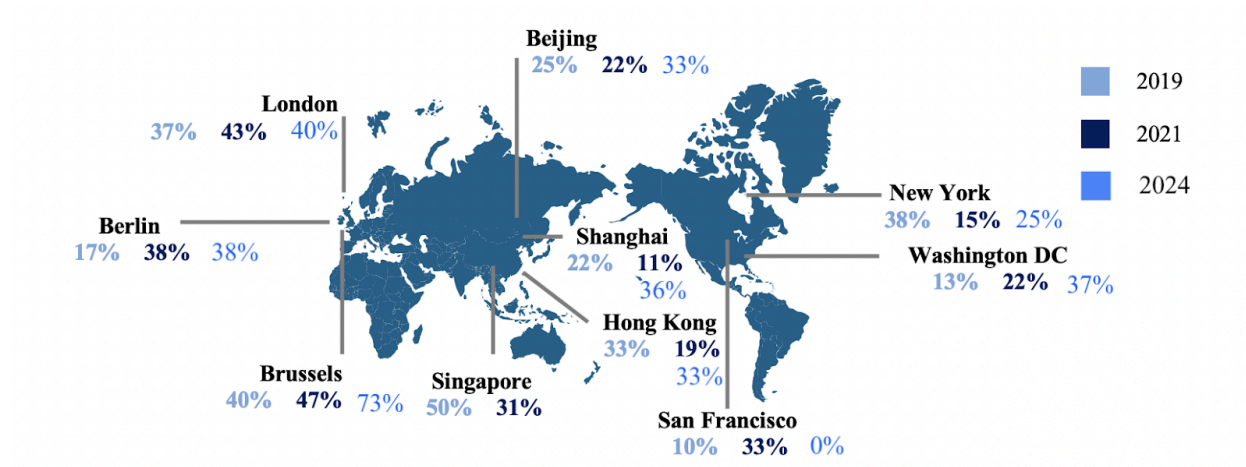
Figure 25. Ability of Chinese companies to compete in global markets with Western counterparts



(up 11%).

There was a mixed picture in the US, however, with Washington DC rising from 13% to 35% in 2019, while San Francisco has fallen from 33% to 0% over the same period, reflecting rising nervousness among those in the political capital but clear confidence in its technological hub.

While global views on the ability of Chinese technology to compete with international counterparts were similar to previous surveys, diverging trends emerge within chapters between 2019 and 2024. Notably, chapters in China responded positively to China's ability, as can be seen in Shanghai (up 27%), Hong Kong (up 14%), and Beijing



4. Conclusion

2024 and 2025 have been eventful years in the China watching community and, indeed, the world, with more than 2 billion people around the world voting in 2024. With the world's largest economy, the United States, now undergoing a generational change in its foreign policy strategy under President Trump, attitudes about China have changed significantly in the US and abroad.

In response, YCW anticipates that attitudes about China will continue to evolve as its position changes relative to the US. The popularity of China and Chinese companies at 2025's COP summit in Belém, Brazil point to early signs of this, even as Chinese policy on Taiwan and in the South China Sea rattle allies and neighbors.

2024's YCW Pulse Survey, above all else, reveals the fractious nature of China's reputation around the world. China watchers held divided opinions on China in 2024, and the factors that drove the positive opinions—and the negative ones as well—have only intensified. Divergence, for the foreseeable future, may then be the new norm.

5. About Young China Watchers

Young China Watchers (YCW) is a dynamic network of young professionals actively engaged with issues related to China.

First established in Beijing in 2010, YCW has steadily expanded its network to 6,000+ members across 10 chapters around the world—including Hong Kong, Singapore, London, Berlin, Brussels, San Francisco, New York, and Washington, D.C.—as well as a thriving online community.

Through our global network, we seek to foster the next generation of China thought leaders and create person-to-person connections that will enrich the China watching community worldwide.

Our Core Activities

YCW provides opportunities for engaged individuals to interact and discuss the most pressing issues emerging from China today through a few key activities:

Speaker Series – Regular online webinars, roundtable discussions, and dinners featuring senior figures from the China academic, policy, and business communities.

Editorial Content – Our blog serves as a platform for analysis and conversation, capturing diverse perspectives from across our chapters. Our editorial content promotes emerging voices within the YCW network and has been featured in established China-focused outlets such as MERICS, The Diplomat, and ChinaFile.

Projects & Initiatives

Events – YCW chapters around the world regularly organize networking and other social events designed to create community in the cities where we have chapters.

Conferences – YCW London hosts a half-day conference in partnership with King's College Lau China Institute, bringing together leading and emerging China experts on a single platform.

Research – The YCW Pulse Survey is the first global study examining the views of young professionals engaged with China.

Join Us

YCW runs an open membership policy.

Join our global community at: www.youngchinawatchers.com/join

For other inquiries, please contact: info@youngchinawatchers.com

