
SERBIA HOSTING CHINESE FORUMS TO BOOST COOPERATION WITH EASTERN EUROPE

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A third summit of transport ministers from China and 16 countries in Central and Eastern Europe is being held in Belgrade this week.

Simultaneous with the transport forum on October 16 and 17, a third forum of the mayors of the capitals of China and the European countries participating in Beijing's cooperative mechanism with the region is also being held in Belgrade.

The so-called "16+1" cooperative effort is a Chinese government initiative to promote business and investment relations between China and the former communist bloc countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

In July, the European Union sounded an alarm about China's growing role in the Western Balkans, warning that Beijing could turn countries in the region into Trojan horses that would one day become European Union members.

European Commissioner Johannes Hahn told Politico's EU Confidential podcast that China's "combination of capitalism and a political dictatorship" could appeal to some leaders in the region on the continent's southeastern flank.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/serbia-hosting-chinese-forums-boost-cooperation-eastern-central-europe/29547817.html>

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