



### China's growth points to a better second half but cannot hide rapid structural deceleration

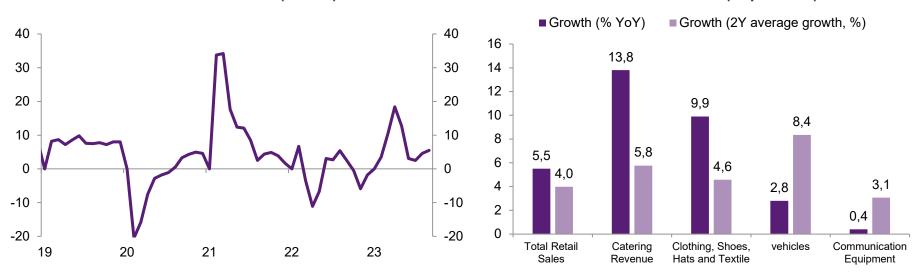
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### After a boost from the reopening, China's consumption waned in the second quarter, but re-accelerated since August, boosted by both commodity and catering retail sales



Source: Natixis, National Bureau of Statistics of China, WIND

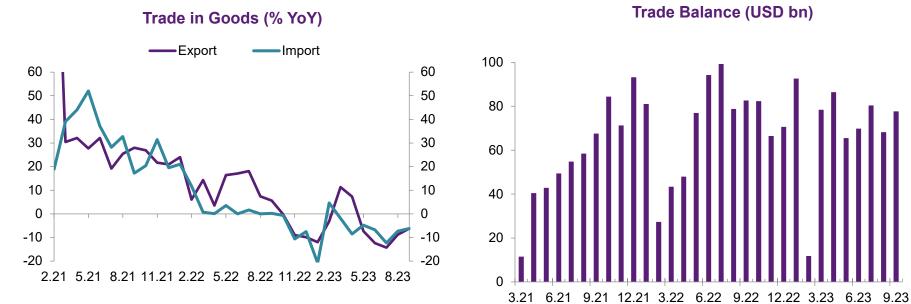
China Retail Sales (% YoY)

**China Retail Sales (September)** 

Source: Natixis, National Bureau of Statistics of China, WIND



# China's exports have been falling since May but imports have fallen even more leading to a still robust trade surplus

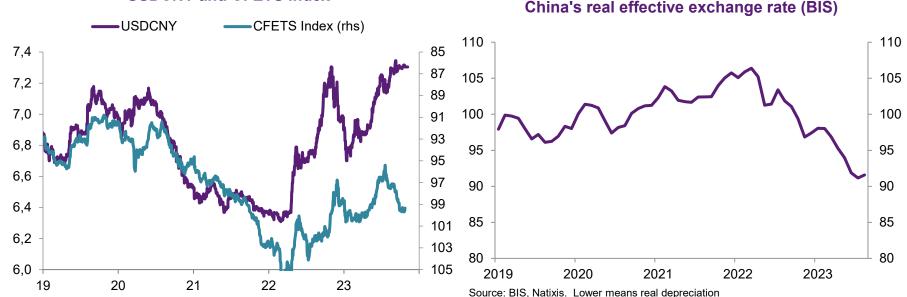


Source: Natixis, National Bureau of Statistics of China, Bloomberg



Source: Natixis, National Bureau of Statistics of China, Bloomberg

#### The lack of inflation (if not deflation in producer and export prices) together with a very week RMB is allowing China to gain huge competitiveness with rest of the world

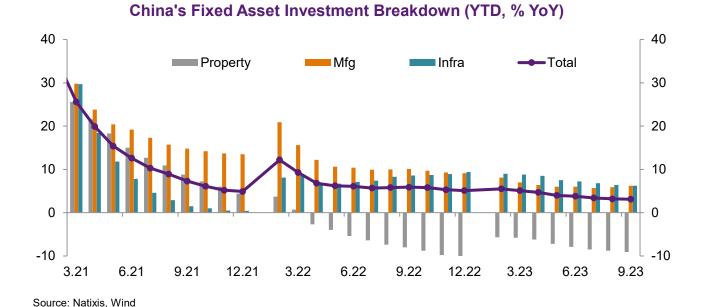


USDCNY and CFETS Index

N.B. Data as of Nov 3 2023. Source: Natixis, Bloomberg

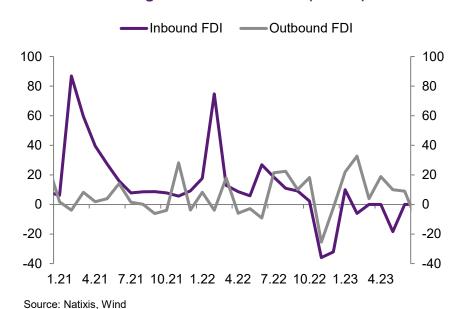


Investment, particularly dragged by the property slump, with an overall growth rate of only 3.1 in September, much slower than 2022 (5.1%) notwithstanding the multiple lockdowns. While the bulk of the slowdown is in real estate, also manufacturing and infra-related investment is weaker



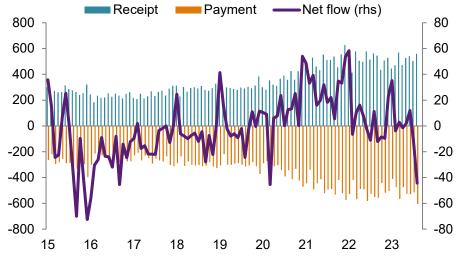
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China's inbound FDI coming down. More generally China continues to see very large capital outflows given the very negative interest rate differential with US and underperforming stock market, which means that a trade surplus is needed for China not to lose forex reserves like in 2015



Foreign Direct Investment (% YoY)

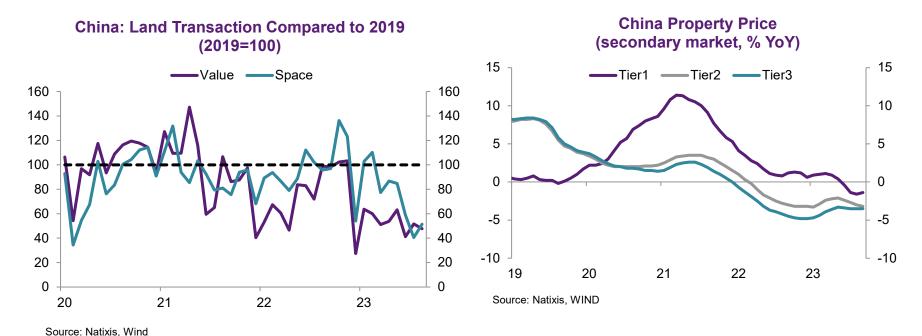
China Capital Flow (USD bn)



Source: Natixis, Wind

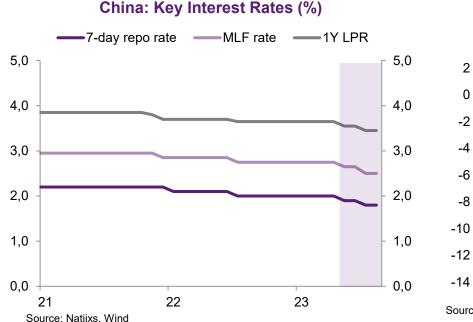
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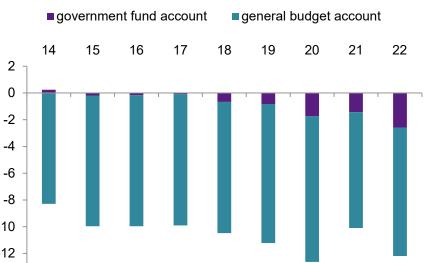
Country Garden's woes added concerns to the already ailing property sector, so far property sales very sluggish, which together prompted the easing measures for the housing market. Also land sales not recovering, which does not bode well for the financial health of local governments





The PBOC has conducted several rounds of rate cuts since June and more should come unless the economy turns quickly. The fiscal space is much more limited with huge budget deficits and public debt reaching 100% of GDP in 2023. Recent RMB 1 trillion announcement in new debt issuance just serves the purpose of avoiding cliff from last year issuance





China's local fiscal balance (% GDP)

Source: Natixis, CEIC





### **Structural deceleration remains intact if not worsening**



China expected to grow 5.2% in 2023, 4.5% in 2024, but given the current trend of slowdown, its long-term growth will fade to only 2.3% in 2035. That said, such a growth trajectory is already enough to help China's GDP per capita reach 25,000 USD by 2035



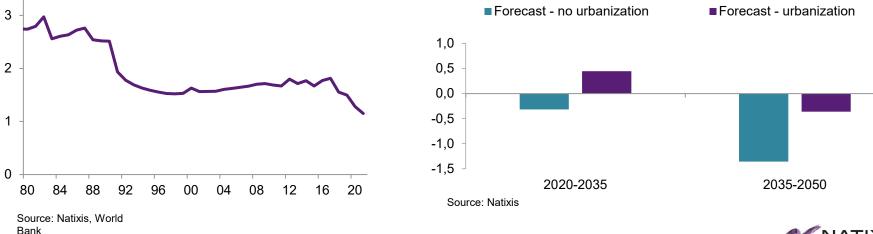
Source: Natixis, United Nations



Among the factors explaining the structural deceleration, aging receives a lot of attention but the bulk of the impact will only happen from 2035 when urbanization comes to an end. From then on, aging should shave off another 1.5% pp of growth to the already meager 2.3% growth. From 2035, China will look very much like Japan

China: Fertility Rate (birth per woman)

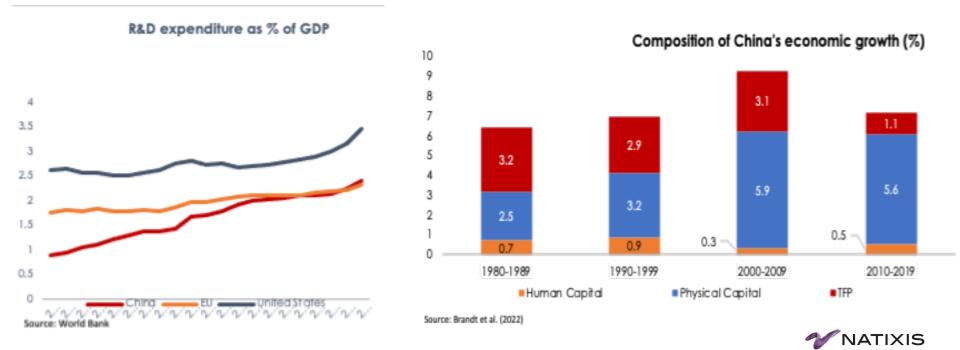
Forecast impact of population ageing on China's GDP growth rate (%, only the labour supply channel is considered and no change in labour productivity)



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Resources dedicated to innovate are huge but no clear evidence yet of how much such innovation can mitigate structural deceleration: TPF decreasing and lower than in other Asian countries when their income per capita was similar to that of China today





# **103** Impact of China's deceleration on the rest of the world



### China's deceleration would mostly impact the world through trade channel. Still, the pandemic has put China at a different level (especially exports) but with a big pivot its exports to the Global South

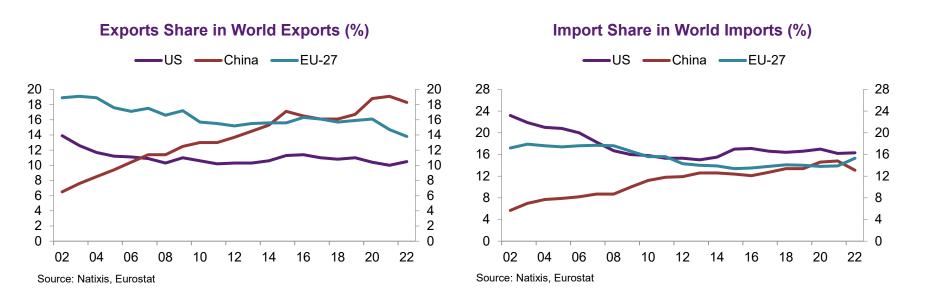




Source: Natixis, CEIC

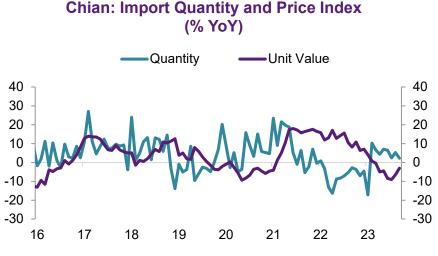


# China's export market share is now much higher than the US and increasingly larger than its import market share

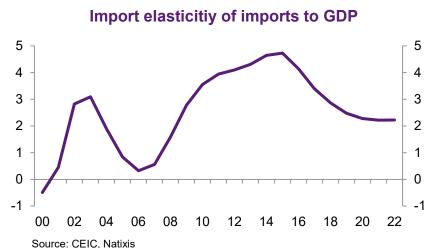




### China's imports decelerated not only because of muted growth in China but also lower income elasticity for imports (selfreliance?)



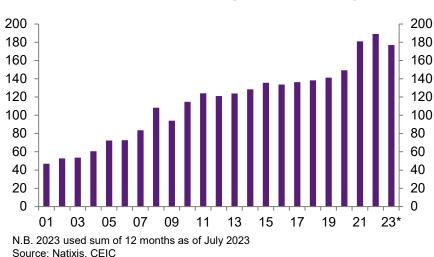
Source: Natixis, CEIC



Note: The coefficient is estimated by using the varying coefficient model by regression In(imports) on In(GDP) from 1995 to 2022.

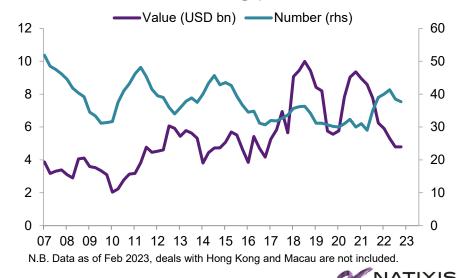


# Inbound foreign direct investment is also coming down, which is reducing the impact on the Chinese economy in the rest of the world



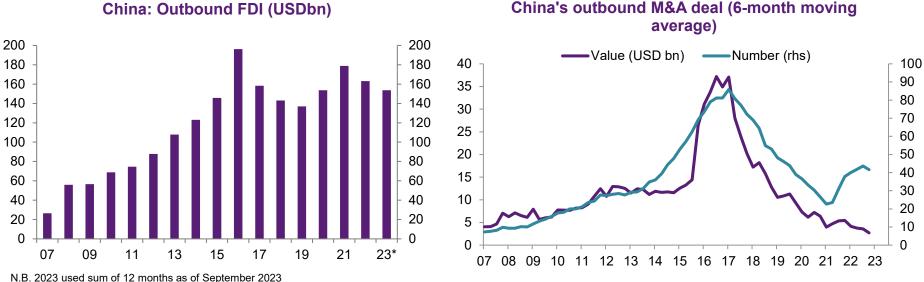
China: Inbound FDI (utilized, USDbn)

China's inbound M&A deal (6-month moving average)



INVESTMENT BANKIN

### China has also lowered its outbound FDI, including M&A deals



China: Outbound FDI (USDbn)

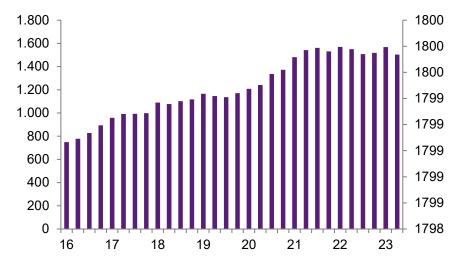
Source: Natixis, CEIC

N.B. Data as of Feb 2023, deals with Hong Kong and Macau are not included. Source: Natixis



# China's overall cross-boarder bank financing is coming down since its peak in 2021

Foreign Claims of Chinese Banks (USDbn)



Source: Natixis, CEIC



# All in all China's co-dependence with the rest of the world is decreasing

Many reasons for this.

- 1. China's own push through dual circulation/ self reliance
- 2. Also China's financial constraints limiting its investment /lending
- 3. US containment/ worsening image of China pushing down FDI into China

But still key channel for China's influence in the world is its supply which creates critical dependences: green tech is a good example

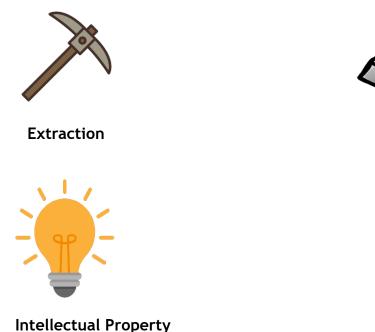




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China has managed to retain value added particularly in the green sectors, now it is dominating a wide range of sectors, from extraction, refining, innovation and manufacturing





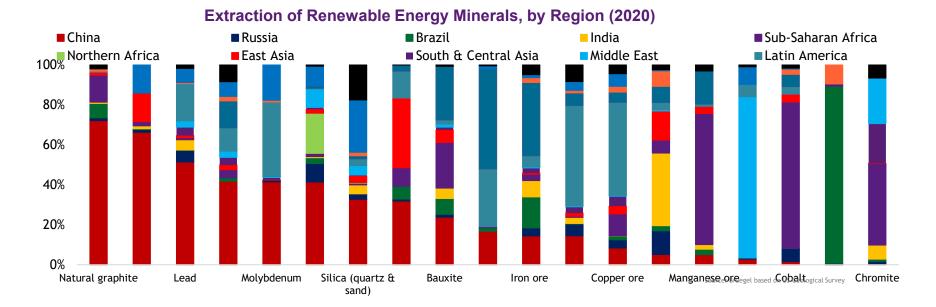
Refining



Manufacturing



China dominates the extraction of rare earth elements (REEs), with the remainder mostly extracted in East Asia and Australia. Overall, mineral extraction activities are dispersed across geographically diverse stakeholders.





China's principal dominance lies in refining. Note that REEs, silicon and cobalt are, respectively, crucial for the production of generators in wind turbines and electric motors, solar PV panels, and high-energy density Li-ion EV batteries.

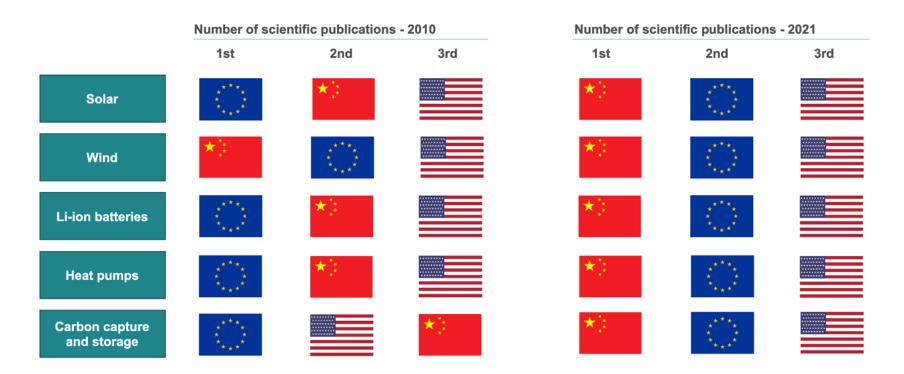
China Russia Brazil India Sub-Saharan Africa Northern Africa East Asia South & Central Asia Middle East Latin America 100% 90% 80% 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0% REEs Cobalt Aluminium Lithium Ferrochromium Niobium Copper

Refining of renewable energy minirals, by region (2020)

Source: Bruegel based on US Geological Survey, IEA



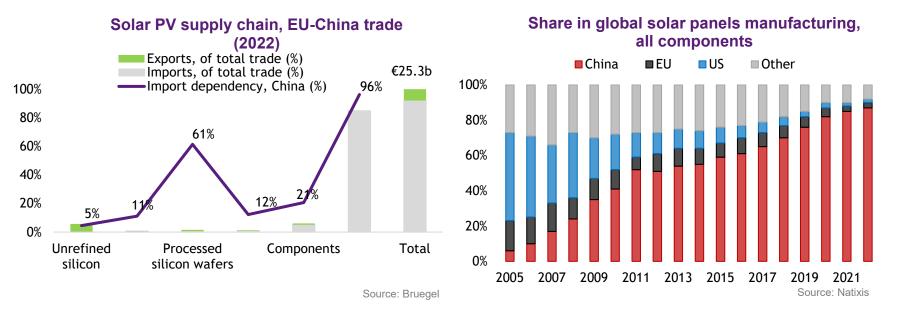
# China is no longer simply a manufacturer, but widely engaged in scientific research on green energy, leading in research output.





#### Manufacturing: EU imports of solar PV are highly concentrated in China

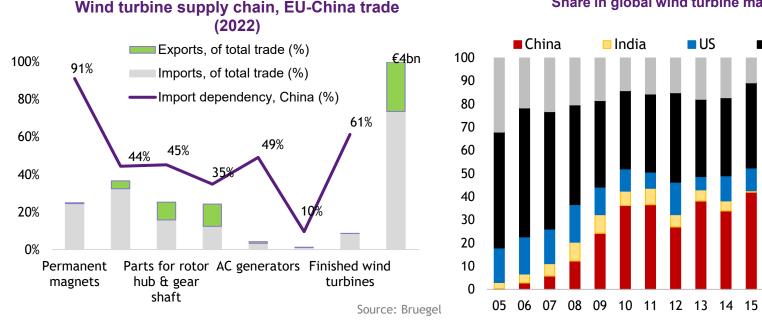
China increasingly dominates solar PV manufacturing, capturing most of the value chain. Note that the EU is a large net exporter of unrefined silicon to China (€1.4bn in 2022).





# Manufacturing: China less important for wind turbines, but with peaks for some parts of the supply chain

The wind turbine manufacturing supply chain is more balanced, with more intermediate trade. Here too, China is expanding its market share, yet the EU remains a sizeable player. EU imports of permanent magnets are highly concentrated with China, at 91%.



Share in global wind turbine manufacturing (%)

■ EU



20

21 22

18 19

Source: Natixis

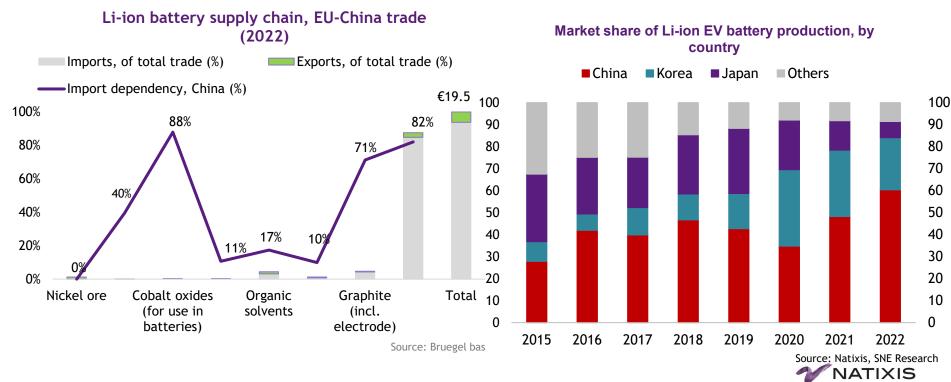
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Other

# Manufacturing: EU imports of Li-ion batteries also highly concentrated in China

China has significantly increased its EV battery market share since 2015. Meanwhile, there is little trade in intermediate battery components, meaning that most EU EV battery imports from China are of batteries fully produced domestically.



# What can the EU do to reduce strategic dependence? Why to derisking but how?

There are two types of risks related to China's dominance of supply chains for global decarbonization:

1. <u>Unintended risk</u>: Potential disruptions in China's supply chains of green energy due to climate-related disasters or other shocks.

2. <u>Intended risk</u>: Retaliation from China's side, as a response of the EU aligning with US on chip ban/ sanctions or any other factor.

**Derisking** should not be understood as reshoring. The are other options.



### What about a partnership?

Even if Chinese supply chains continue to dominate the market, a group of countries could build a **supplementary supply chain** based on **coordinated specialization**.

Countries would join on the basis of their capacity and comparative advantage in joining parts of the supply chain:

- 1. extraction, based on their reserves of critical raw materials
- 2. refining, closely aligned to the location of critical raw materials and social licence for refining there
- 3. innovation, based on scientific research that improves green energy manufacturing
- 4. manufacturing to be shared among the partnership depending on cost factors/economies of scale.



### **Benefits of a partnership**

- De-risking within the partnership means ensuring access to green energy goods while reducing dependence on the China-centric supply chain.
- Reducing risk of path dependence on particular technologies.
- For countries with abundant critical raw materials, avoiding China's monopsony position.
- For countries with potentially large economies of scale to manufacture: access to tech transfer and raw materials.







### Some take aways

- China's growth should improve a bit after its post-covid stagnation but growth will remain rather moderate for what was expected and close to the 5% target.
- Notwithstanding the difficulties or perhaps because of them China is focusing on the manufacturing sector and on keeping trade surplus, given the large capital outflows.
- If we add the gain in competitiveness from the lack of inflation (if not deflation) and the weak RMB, China is becoming a formidable competitor for European companies.
- Its increasingly strong ties with the Global South are also key to understand China's fast move in third markets.
- More structurally, though, China's outlook is quite gloomy. growth will continue to decelerate. Aging is only one of the factors. Decelerating productivity, notwithstanding innovation efforts is a key one.
- China's influence on the West shrinking, whether in terms of its market (imports) or investment (inbound or outbound). China's way to counterbalance its shrinking influence is to grow the supply of key goods, creating critical dependences. The best example is green tech.
- The EU's reaction (derisking) is understandable as a way to reduce such dependence but reshoring is very costly. Other options, like a green tech partnership could offer a solution



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