

PM+: Europe & China: seeing eye to eye on ICT

Written by Victor Zhang on 3 July 2015 in Opinion Plus
Opinion Plus

Chinese companies have become the fastest growing source of foreign investment in Europe, writes Victor Zhang.



A survey released by the European Investment Monitor last month revealed that Western Europe was the number one global investment destination in 2014. Chinese companies had become the fastest growing source of foreign investment here, up by almost 40 % from a year ago. These figures make two things clear: there is huge potential for win-win collaboration between Europe and China, and the window of opportunity to seize this potential is open right now.

At a time when Europe is seeking to mobilise investments of no less than €315 billion in three years to boost jobs and growth, it is vital to connect potential investors and promising projects. The EU's plans are matched by a Chinese initiative similar in scale and scope: its 'One Belt, One Road' strategy hopes to spur cooperation along land-based and maritime 'Silk Roads'.

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As the move towards hyperconnectivity is taking Sino-European cooperation into the digital realm, the complementary strengths of Europe's fertile ICT ecosystem and China's fast-growing digital sector mean that new technologies are becoming a key area for mutual investment and joint growth.

Huawei is in a unique position to support Europe's and China's ambitious plans for their common future. The company is a driving force of European innovation, having made Europe its global centre of expertise. In May 2015, we established our European Research Institute here to manage our growing array of European research facilities and strengthen our win-win partnership with the European industry. At the same time, Huawei helps make the voice of the European ICT research and business community heard in China.

The company's role in driving 5G cooperation at both ends epitomises this two-way effort. While Europe and China are exploring future cooperation to pave the way for the next generation of mobile communications, Huawei has already taken concrete steps towards delivering a global, market-ready 5G standard by 2020.

In Europe, it is working with industry leaders, consortia, universities and innovation platforms, as well as participating in EU 5G research projects including the METIS consortium and the 5G-PPP. At the Chinese level, Huawei played a major role in the push to open R&D funding to companies and researchers from other countries. The adoption of the 863 Programme was a direct result of these efforts.

Over the past few years, Huawei has promoted ICT dialogue between China and Europe in areas including 5G, along with cloud computing, the Internet of Things and standardisation.

As we are designing the next generation of mobile technology, we must not forget that the next generation of innovators deserves as much attention as the technology itself, if not more. Huawei has decided to let young people benefit from the experience and support it can provide as a global ICT company. Our flagship e-skills initiative for young people, the Seeds for the Future programme, currently covers 20 European countries, and more than 400 young Europeans have participated so far.

Forty years ago, Europe and China started out on their common destiny. From the first step to the solid partnership that unites us today, we have come a long way. We have been learning from each other at every step along the road, forging an alliance that is more than the sum of its parts. Huawei is proud to be a part of the journey.

About the author

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