OCTOBER 2025
N°1

CAPS
Center for Asia-Pacific Studies

CAPS MONITORING

INTRODUCTORY WORDS BY THE DIRECTOR

Dear readers,

you have just opened the October edition of the monthly monitoring report from the newly established Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies (CAPS) at CEVRO University, which reviews the most significant developments in the region over the past month.

Our Centre was founded with a clear mission: to deepen understanding of the political, economic and strategic transformations shaping one of the world's most dynamic regions — the Asia-Pacific — and to translate that knowledge into practical insights for Czech policymakers, businesses and society.

This monitoring is a direct extension of that mission. Over recent decades, the Asia-Pacific has shifted from a peripheral concern in global affairs to a central arena of power, competition and opportunity. It now drives much of the world's economic growth, technological innovation and geopolitical change.

Yet in the Czech debate, the region is still viewed primarily through a Sinocentric lens, with disproportionate attention given to China while other crucial actors and processes are often overlooked.

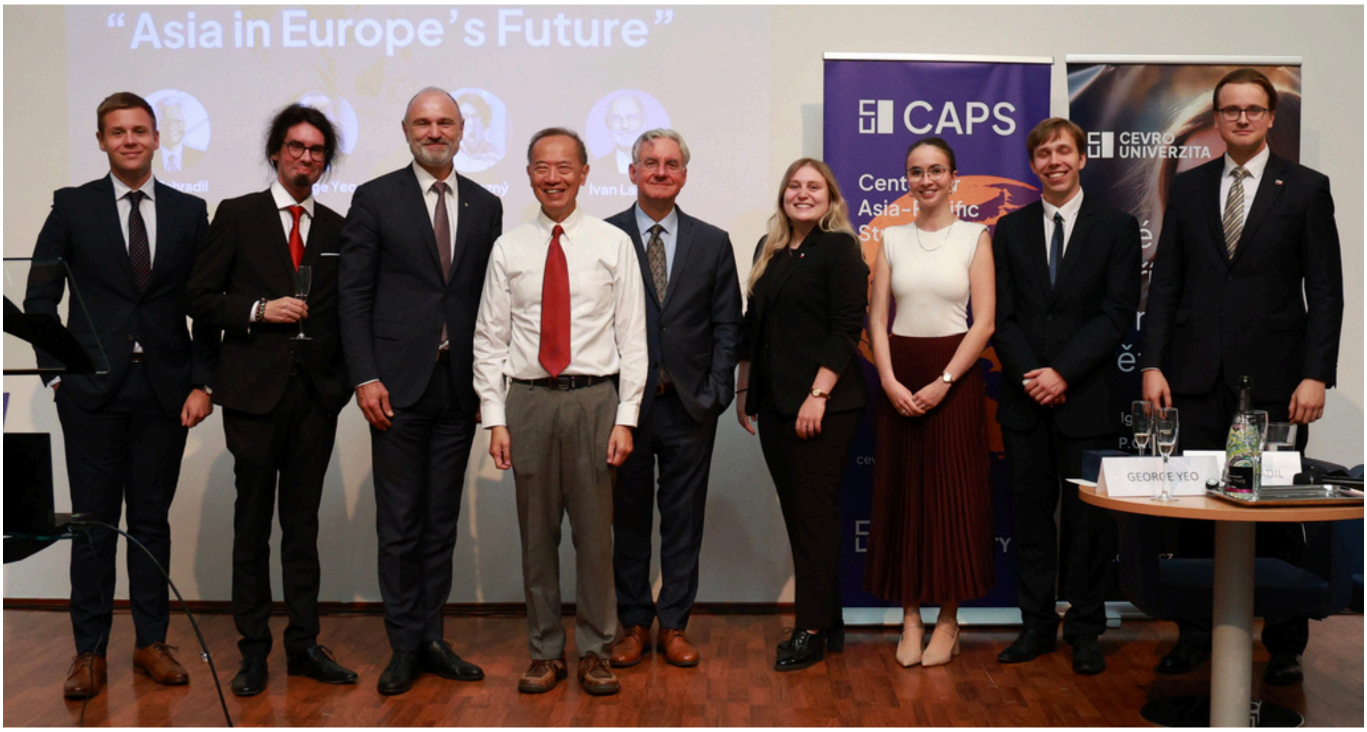
CAPS monitoring seeks to broaden this perspective. While China undoubtedly plays a pivotal role — from its leadership in initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), RCEP and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), to its expanding global influence — our analysis goes well beyond this single focus. We examine Taiwan's technological leadership in semiconductors and artificial intelligence, the innovative capacities and foreign policy weight of Japan and South Korea, and their growing importance as strategic and economic partners for Europe and the Czech Republic.

Our attention also turns to the emerging powers of Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and other ASEAN members, whose economic dynamism and geopolitical significance are reshaping global governance. India, too, has become an indispensable actor — asserting itself as both a voice of the Global South and a central pillar of the emerging multipolar order through its “Act East” policy and active engagement in the G20.

The monitoring also follows the increasingly strategic role of Central Asia — particularly Kazakhstan — where “multi-vector” foreign policies balance relations with Russia, China, USA and the EU. These states’ roles as transport and energy corridors, their reserves of critical raw materials, and their engagement with global trends such as de-risking and “China Plus One” strategies create new opportunities for European engagement and for Czech foreign and economic policy.

By continuously tracking these complex developments, CAPS’ monthly monitoring aims to serve as a bridge between academic research, policy practice and business strategy. It reflects our mission to inform public debate, support evidence-based decision-making and strengthen the Czech Republic’s strategic presence in the Asia-Pacific. Ultimately, our goal is to turn knowledge into actionable insights that enhance the Czech position in a region set to shape the 21st century.

Jan Železný
Executive Director



CHINA

CO summit and Xi-Trump call

President Xi Jinping met with 20 attending world leaders at the September 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Tianjin and underscored Beijing's strategic ambition to shape a "stable new world order" rooted in multipolar cooperation and respect for national sovereignty. President Xi Jinping's address emphasized the need for an inclusive security architecture that counters the perceived exclusivity of U.S.-led institutions and reinforces China's central role among Eurasian states. China's military conducted daily Type 054A and 054B frigate deployments to the Yellow Sea Provisional Measures Zone from August 23-28, coinciding with South Korean President Lee Jae-myung's diplomatic visits. In parallel with its multilateral engagement, China sought to manage its bilateral relationship with the United States through high-level dialogue. Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump conducted their first direct call of the year on September 18, pledging to explore a resolution to the TikTok dispute and laying groundwork for a prospective Trump visit to Beijing. The conversation reflected a cautious de-escalation in Sino-American tensions, with both sides agreeing to maintain communication channels and explore areas of mutual economic and technological interest despite ongoing strategic competition. On 25th of September US Congressional Delegation visited China for the first time since 2019.

Yarlung Tsangpo mega-dam and AI infrastructure strategic pivot

Domestically, China pressed ahead with its most ambitious renewable energy initiative by formally launching the Yarlung Tsangpo hydroelectric mega-dam project in Tibet for 167 billion dollars, comprising five interconnected power stations designed to generate substantial annual output of 300 billion kWh. While the project reinforces China's commitment to energy security and carbon reduction, critics warn of significant environmental risks, seismic vulnerabilities, and social displacement downstream, highlighting the tension between China's development imperatives and sustainability concerns. On September 17 China's Cyberspace Administration escalated its technology decoupling efforts by directing major domestic companies including ByteDance and Alibaba to cease testing and procurement of Nvidia's RTX Pro 6000D chips, extending beyond previous restrictions on the H20 model. The directive followed regulatory assessments concluding that domestic AI processors from companies like Huawei and Cambricon had achieved performance levels comparable to Nvidia's China-specific offerings under U.S. export controls.

China's AI capital expenditure is projected to reach $84-98 billion in 2025, with government funding constituting up to 400 billion yuan and this comprehensive ban signals Beijing's strategic pivot toward complete semiconductor self-sufficiency, compelling Chinese technology giants to abandon hopes of renewed Nvidia supply and accelerate development of homegrown AI infrastructure capabilities as part of the broader technological competition with the United States.

Economic growth, real estate and PBOC rates

China's economy demonstrated mixed signals in September 2025, with H1 GDP growth of 5.3% year-on-year exceeding the government's 5% target, but August data revealed significant deceleration as industrial production slowed to 5.2%, which is the weakest since August 2024 and retail sales declined to 3.4%, falling short of forecasts and marking the slowest pace since November 2024. The property sector continued its 26th consecutive month of price declines, with new home prices falling 0.3% month-on-month and 2.5% year-on-year in August, though representing the slowest decline since March 2024. The economic slowdown reflects multiple structural challenges beyond cyclical factors: demographic headwinds from rapid population aging with China's birth rate falling to 7.24 per 1,000 people and a dependency ratio projected to shift by 60 percentage points between 2010-2060, creating labor shortages and straining productivity growth. The People's Bank of China (PBOC), China’s central bank, maintained its cautious stance by keeping the one-year LPR at 3.0% and five-year LPR at 3.5% unchanged for the fourth consecutive month on September 22, while the yuan appreciated approximately 0.59% during September to trade around 7.11-7.14 against the USD, reflecting monetary authorities' balance between supporting growth and maintaining financial stability amid persistent economic headwinds.

CENTRAL ASIA

Dushanbe hosts regional governance conference

Tajikistan's capital city Dushanbe is set to host the third regional conference of the *Effective Governance for Economic Development Program* (EGED) on September 24th and 25th. Organizers of the conference expect to bring together more than 150 participants from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyz Republic. Officials, policy experts, academics, and civil society representatives from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan will gather to debate how data and research can drive smarter policymaking and deliver more inclusive growth of Central Asia.

The two-day event should spotlight case studies of evidence-based reforms, from streamlined policy delivery to greater public oversight, highlighting how governments in the region are experimenting with new approaches to governance. The conference is being organized jointly by Tajikistan's Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the World Bank, and the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, with financial backing from UK International Development.

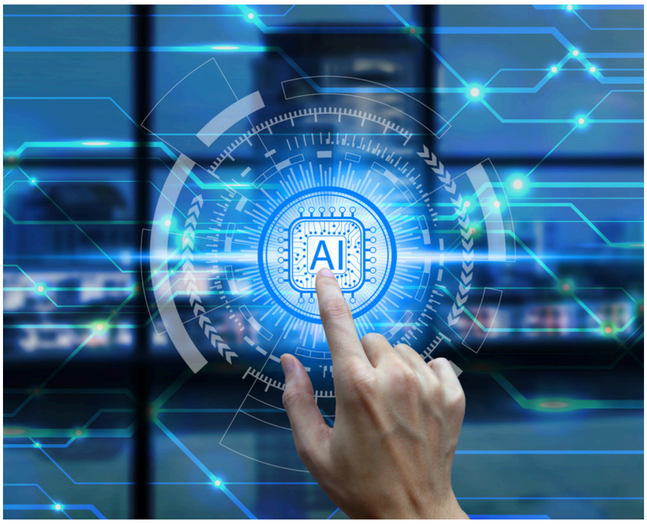
The British co-financing signals the intent to deepen the United Kingdom's profile in Central Asia, a region where Western actors traditionally play a secondary role to Russia and China. By backing governance and reform initiatives, the UK positions itself as a partner for institutional strengthening. For Tajikistan and other Central Asian states, the support underscores the growing interest of external partners. This move also aligns with London's Global Britain strategy in the post-Brexit era, which seeks to project the UK's influence more actively beyond Europe by engaging with strategic regions through development, governance, and security partnerships.

Kazakhstan embarks on ambitious AI, hi-tech, and institutional reform

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev delivered his 2025 State-of-the-Nation Address, unveiling a far-reaching reform agenda centered on digital transformation, economic modernization, and institutional renewal. Among the key initiatives are the establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Artificial Intelligence, the adoption of a comprehensive Digital Code, and the promotion of AI integration across all major sectors of the economy. Tokayev also outlined plans for political reform, including a transition to a unicameral parliament to be decided by a 2027 referendum, and underscored the need for progress in transport, energy, agriculture, and healthcare.

A flagship component of this vision is the Alatau City project — envisioned as Kazakhstan's first fully digital "smart city." Situated between Almaty and Konaev, Alatau is designed to become a global hub for innovation, finance, and tourism, combining advanced urban planning with cutting-edge technologies such as 5G connectivity and cryptocurrency payment systems. The city aims to attract both domestic and foreign investment, supported by a special governance framework to streamline development. By 2050, Alatau is expected to host around two million residents and generate more than one million jobs, serving as a model for Kazakhstan's future urban development.

Collectively, these initiatives seek to position Kazakhstan as a leading Eurasian technology and logistics hub, modernize its governance structures, and strengthen its international influence.



EAST ASIA

Tokyo’s political changes

Japan's political landscape was fundamentally altered by Prime Minister (PM) Shigeru Ishiba's resignation announcement on September 7, 2025, following electoral defeats that eliminated his ruling coalition's majority in both houses of parliament amid public dissatisfaction over rising living costs and trade pressures. Ishiba's departure came immediately after finalizing a trade agreement with the United States that reduced automotive tariffs from 25 percent to 15 percent in exchange for Japan's commitment to invest $550 billion in U.S. industries, including $150 billion for shipbuilding and $100 billion for liquefied natural gas projects, directly addressing Japan's core export sectors including passenger vehicles valued at $49.2 billion and agricultural products worth $11.9 billion in U.S. markets.

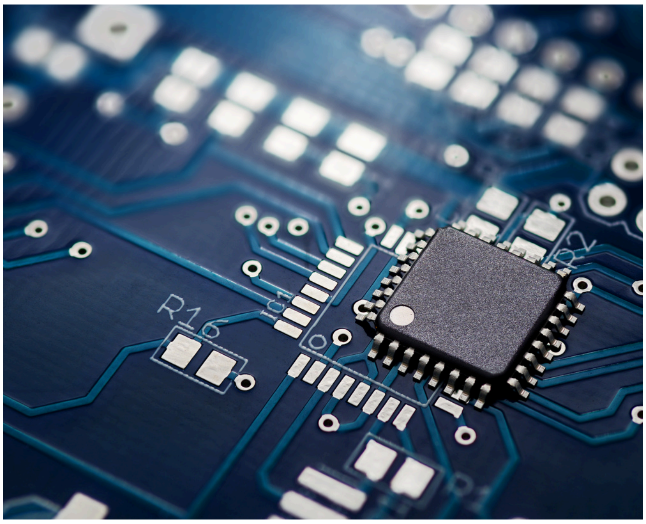
Sanae Takaichi’s victory in the LDP leadership contest promises Japan’s first female prime minister and broader fiscal stimulus efforts following the Abenomics spirit while reinforcing security alignment with the U.S.

The transition process is expected to proceed smoothly. Following Japan's 2024 general election, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its coalition partner Komeito no longer hold a majority in the House of Representatives, creating a more unpredictable parliamentary landscape. Despite this, the LDP+Komeito coalition is expected to secure backing from centrist or issue-aligned opposition parties, who have indicated willingness to support or abstain on key votes rather than form a united opposition. Consequently, there are no concrete signs that opposition forces plan to block the nomination of the next prime minister, ensuring a likely unproblematic selection process. The LDP's weakened position, however, means the upcoming leader will need to adeptly negotiate with opposition parties to maintain a stable government.

Regardless of who becomes Japan’s next prime minister, domestic companies are already investing in modern technologies. For example, Japanese SoftBank has boosted its Nvidia stake to $3 billion and added $330 million in TSMC shares, underscoring its bet on AI hardware. At the same time, Metaplanet snapped up 5,419 BTC for $632 million, bringing its treasury to 25,555 BTC (nearly $3 billion), now ranking among the top five corporate Bitcoin holders worldwide.

South Korea's export policies, AI development and digitalization

South Korea's economic relationship with the United States has come under strain following the Trump administration's imposition of 25 percent tariffs on Korean automobiles and steel, alongside universal 10 percent tariffs on other exports, disrupting the country's export-oriented growth model and forcing President Lee Jae-myung's administration to accelerate economic diversification strategies. Despite these challenges, South Korea maintained a trade surplus of $6.51 billion in August 2025, driven primarily by record semiconductor exports of $15.1 billion, though this represented a slowdown in overall export growth to 1.3 percent year-on-year as the impact of U.S. trade restrictions began materializing in reduced shipments. South Korea's commitment to invest $350 billion in U.S. projects under the bilateral tariff agreement has sparked domestic concerns, with government advisors warning that such upfront payments could potentially destabilize Asia's fourth-largest economy, leading Seoul to propose alternative financing structures including loans, loan guarantees, and equity contributions rather than direct cash payments. South Korea is doing its best to achieve AI independence by rapidly advancing its artificial intelligence capabilities through the establishment of flagship research hubs, including the National AI Research Centre in Daegu and Seoul's Digital Future Institute. Despite these investments, South Korea faces significant digitalization challenges, particularly in regulatory harmonization and inclusive access, as evidenced by implementation gaps in maritime digitization initiatives that underscore the need for robust infrastructure upgrades and a comprehensive training program



SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Thai PM removed by Constitutional Court

At the end of August 2025, Thailand's Constitutional Court removed Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra from office over an ethics violation linked to a leaked phone call with Cambodian Senate president Hun Sen. The Court had already suspended Shinawatra in early July, and on 29 August it ruled, seven to two, in favor of dismissal. Paetongtarn and Hun Sen held a phone call on the Thai-Cambodian border crisis. The controversy centered on her critical remarks about a Thai Lieutenant General Boonsin Padklang. This is seen as undermining national interest during ongoing tensions with Cambodia. The political fallout weakened Paetongtarn's coalition, after the Bhumjaithai Party withdrew its support in June. Bhumjaithai leader Anutin Charnvirakul was elected prime minister on 7th of September and subsequently received royal assent to officially hold the office.

Charnvirakul also presented a plan for economic reforms. The plan includes relief for households with debt under 100 000 baht and measures to provide liquidity for small businesses. The new government also announced a co-payment scheme subsidizing 60 % of certain food and consumer goods purchased by Thai citizens.

Vietnam-China Economic cooperation deepens

At the Vietnam-China Investment Forum in September 2025, both states reaffirmed their intention to deepen economic cooperation. The discussions that took place between Chinese and Vietnamese leaders highlighted opportunities in green energy, digital economy and infrastructure. For Vietnam, the main focus is on attracting investment and accessing advanced technologies. China seeks to ensure its position as Vietnam's leading trade partner, and in the face of U.S. tariffs, secure more resilient supply chains.

These priorities were echoed a few weeks later at the Vietnam-China Tourism and Investment Promotion Forum that took place in Beijing. The forum was co-hosted by the China-ASEAN Centre and the Vietnamese Embassy, which brought together three Vietnamese provinces and over 250 companies from both states. Pham Thanh Binh, Vietnamese Ambassador to China, emphasised that cultivating friendly relations with China is a strategic choice and top priority of Hanoi's foreign policy. Bilateral trade reached almost 160 billion USD in the first eight months of 2025, representing a year-on-year increase of 22 %, with China now the third largest foreign investor in Vietnam.

There has also been an increase in tourism, with 3.5 million Chinese visitors arriving in Vietnam during the same period, which makes China the largest source of tourists in the country. These trends underscore Hanoi's growing dependence on Chinese markets and capital, even when Vietnam seeks to maintain economic diversification.

Vietnam deepens economic reforms with focus on clean energy

The Politburo of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) issued Resolution No. 70-NQ/TW at the end of August 2025, with implementation starting in September. This strategic directive outlines measures to ensure national energy security through 2030, with a vision to 2045. It goes beyond earlier policies by emphasizing the renewable energy target of 25–30% of the primary energy supply by 2030. It also calls for the development of nuclear power, improvements in energy efficiency, and the adoption of innovative technologies such as hydrogen and small modular reactors (SMRs). In line with the government's broader economic reform agenda, the resolution promotes greater private-sector participation, enhanced market competitiveness, transparent pricing, and foreign investment in the energy sector. Its overarching goal is to secure a proactive and sustainable energy supply to support economic growth and national defense.

It is consistent with Resolution No. 68-NQ/TW, adopted on 4 May 2025, a landmark directive that positioned the private sector as the central driving force of Vietnam's economy. That resolution set ambitious goals, including the creation of 2 million active enterprises by 2030, promotion of technological innovation, and improvements to the business environment through institutional reforms, reduced administrative burdens, and enhanced access to resources — all aimed at transforming Vietnam into a developed economy by 2045.

SOUTH ASIA

SCO summit highlights India's strategic autonomy

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) held its annual summit in Tianjin on 31 August – 1 September 2025. The summit brought together over twenty heads of state and government from across Eurasia, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Chinese President Xi Jinping, sending a clear signal of closer alignment among its members. The meeting was widely read as an attempt to highlight the SCO's relevance as a non-Western forum for economic cooperation and security.

During the summit, President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi met in China for the first time in seven years. The meeting was framed as an attempt to reset ties between the two Asian giants. Their willingness to signal cooperation was also interpreted as a pragmatic response to the economic pressure that was created by the steep U.S. tariffs. This encounter offered a symbolic gesture of rapprochement, yet the genuine progress in bilateral relations is likely to be slow. Beijing's close partnership with Pakistan remains a persistent obstacle to deeper trust, while India continues to shield its domestic industries from Chinese competition through anti-dumping measures.

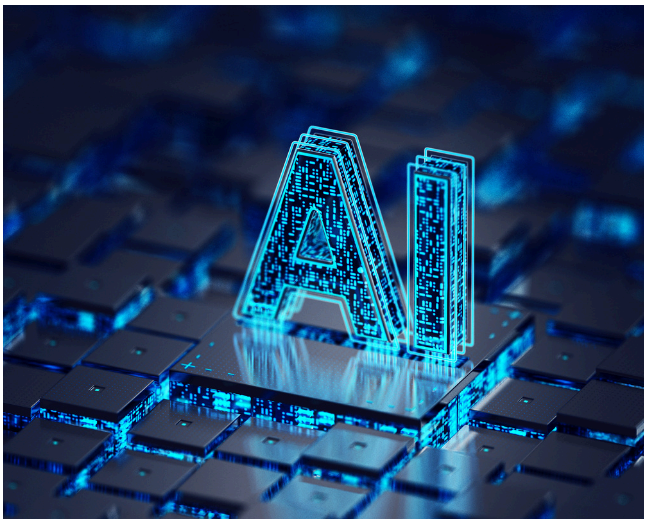
For Russia, this was an opportunity to demonstrate that it remains embedded in regional formats despite Western isolation. China used the occasion to position itself as the central voice of the Global South, while India's presence underscored its policy of strategic hedging with both Western and non-Western partners. Taken together, these elements strengthened the SCO's image as an alternative format to Western influence.

This hedging act was further illustrated by India's participation in Russia's large military exercise Zapad 2025 that was held in Belarus from 10–20 September 2025. India sent around 65 troops to take part in joint manoeuvres and tactical exercises alongside Belarusian and Russian forces. While deepening security cooperation with Japan, Europe and the United States, India also chose to engage in drills alongside Russian and Belarusian forces emphasizing its commitment to strategic autonomy by engaging with both blocs rather than aligning with only one side.

Japan-India strategic cooperation

Japan and India launched the Japan-India AI Cooperation Initiative (JAI) to foster innovative and trusted AI ecosystems through bilateral collaboration on research, policy, and industrial deployment. The initiative encompasses joint projects in cutting-edge technologies, policy sharing through the Economic Security Dialogue, and targeted funding for AI startups, strengthening both nations' competitiveness and resilience in the global AI landscape while advancing foundational AI science and commercial applications.

This new framework builds on cooperation that has already been established. For several years, Japan has supported the training of Indian AI specialists and promoted academic and industrial changes under the Digital Partnership. This continuity was reaffirmed during Prime Minister Modi's recent meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Ishiba in Tokyo. There, both sides underscored the importance of deepening joint research, startup collaboration and talent development.



AUSTRALIA AND OCEANIA

Australia deepens its commitment to AUKUS amid a growing economy

Australia demonstrated unprecedented commitment to the AUKUS partnership and regional security architecture through its September announcement of a $8 billion investment in the Henderson Defence Precinct in Western Australia, marking the largest peacetime increase in defense spending in Australian history; the facility will support construction of naval vessels, contingency docking for nuclear-powered submarines from the early 2030s, and maintenance of U.S. and UK submarines under AUKUS, with an additional A$70 billion in defense spending planned over the next decade. Concurrently, Australia's economy showed remarkable resilience in Q2 2025, with GDP growth of 0.6 percent, up from 0.3 percent in Q1 and exceeding market expectations, positioning it among the strongest performers in developed markets despite a slide in the global competitiveness ranking from 13th to 18th on weaker business efficiency metrics. The nation's mining sector underpins much of this strength, exemplified by South Australia's record copper exports of$4.3 billion in FY 2024–25, a 17 percent year-on-year increase as Australia leverages the world's second-largest copper reserves amid surging demand for clean-energy metals. Australia also plays an active role in Oceania through initiatives enhancing regional maritime security, disaster response, and climate resilience, notably delivering the landing craft VOEA Late to Tonga to boost its capacity for humanitarian assistance and maritime law enforcement.

Chinese police cooperation with Vanuatu

Vanuatu has become a focal point in the intensifying geopolitical competition in Oceania, as China's latest police cooperation agreement signed in September 2025 includes provisions for equipment supply, training, and intelligence sharing, raising concerns among regional actors about Beijing's expanding influence over security structures in the Pacific. This agreement follows China's broader strategy of deepening military and law enforcement ties with small island states, which critics argue could undermine local sovereignty and allow Beijing to establish strategic footholds for operations in the South Pacific. The deal's timing and scope have alarmed neighboring Australia and its partners, who view the increased Chinese presence in Vanuatu as part of a broader effort to counter Western influence and secure maritime access routes. These dynamics underscore the fragile balance of power in Oceania, where traditional alliances are increasingly challenged by China's assertive diplomacy and security outreach amid a backdrop of local political sensitivities and economic dependencies.

Pukpuk Treaty concerns in Papua New Guinea

China has publicly cautioned Papua New Guinea against finalizing the proposed Pukpuk Treaty security agreement with Australia, warning that exclusive bilateral arrangements could compromise PNG's sovereignty and restrict its engagement with third parties, reflecting Beijing's broader strategy to counterbalance Australia's Pacific influence. The deferral of both the Pukpuk Treaty and separate security agreements with Vanuatu highlights the growing complexities of Pacific diplomacy, where domestic opposition and sovereignty concerns have stalled landmark agreements amid intensifying strategic competition between traditional partners and emerging powers across the region. The strategic competition in Oceania intensifies as traditional alliance structures face challenges from economic pressures and sovereignty concerns, potentially reshaping the regional balance of power.

ASIA IN CZECHIA

Toyota Expands Kolín Factory for Electric Car Production

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Czech Republic has announced a significant investment of CZK 17 billion (approx. USD 680 million) in its factory in Kolín, Central Bohemia. The facility, currently producing small cars, will be expanded, modernized and adapted for the production of a battery electric vehicle, which will be the first of its kind manufactured in one of Toyota's European factories. This milestone underscores Toyota's commitment to electrification and innovation in Europe.
The Czech government will support the project with incentives of up to EUR 64 million, with the expansion creating approximately 245 new jobs. Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala called the project a great success and emphasized the importance of modernizing the automotive industry, which accounts for about 10% of Czech GDP. The manufacturing of the new electric vehicle is expected to start in 2028, with an initial annual production of 100,000 vehicles.

Panasonic in Pilsen

While Tokyo navigates domestic turbulence, Japanese corporations are accelerating European expansion. In July 2025, Panasonic opened a $350 million heat-pump plant in Pilsen, its first Czech site, employing 700 workers alongside 80 robots, with plans to double headcount by 2030 and invest an additional CZK 600 million in an on-site R&D center for air-to-water technologies.

Taiwan's manufacturing integration with Central Europe

Taiwan's manufacturing sector demonstrated continued expansion through strategic investments in European operations. CTP's completion of a major electronics facility handover to Taiwanese giant Inventec in the Czech Republic exemplified the accelerating "in Europe for Europe" strategy adopted by multinational manufacturers seeking supply chain risk mitigation amid geopolitical uncertainties. The Czech Republic is not the only country in which Taiwan is investing, but also Poland. Poland is also one of the largest drone importers from Taiwan. This trend reflects the growing importance of Central and Eastern Europe for Asian technology companies and highlights Taiwan's role in global manufacturing supply chains.

CAPS NEWS

The Center for Asia-Pacific Studies (CAPS) officially Launched at CEVRO University

The activities of the Center for Asia-Pacific Studies (CAPS) were officially launched at CEVRO University. The opening ceremony, held at the university's campus in Prague, was accompanied by a keynote lecture delivered by George Yeo, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, entitled Asia in Europe's Future. The subsequent discussion was moderated by Jan Zahradil, Chairman of the Advisory Board and founder of the new center. The newly established center responds to the growing significance of the Asia-Pacific region and its implications for Europe and the Czech Republic. CAPS aims to become a platform for expert debate, to provide analysis and recommendations for both public administration and the private sector, and to contribute to a deeper understanding of this dynamic region.

"The world is changing. What was true yesterday may not be true tomorrow. To understand these shifts, we must remain open to knowledge and ready today. CEVRO University is a place where we do not have to ask tomorrow what we were doing today. The launch of our new Center for Asia-Pacific Studies — marked by the lecture of an exceptional guest — is proof of this vision," explained Ivan Langer, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of CEVRO University.

"We must be able to perceive, analyze, and respond to Asia's growing role in the evolving geopolitical landscape — objectively, without prejudice, and with genuine understanding. I am pleased that CEVRO University is taking on this task by establishing the Center for Asia-Pacific Studies. And I am honored to contribute to this effort as the Chairman of the Advisory Board," said Jan Zahradil, Chairman of the CAPS Advisory Board.

According to Jan Železný, Executive Director of CAPS, the new center will combine research with a strong focus on practical applicability:

“Our goal is to build a top-tier research center that will also engage with the broader public. We therefore aim to pursue public-oriented educational activities, shape public debate, and provide expert support to Czech public institutions and businesses. The applicability and practical relevance of our outputs — particularly in relation to Czech national interests — is our priority.”

CAPS will focus on political, economic, and security developments across the Asia-Pacific. Special attention will also be paid to changes in the regional security architecture, the dynamics of multilateral cooperation, and their impact on international trade, innovation, and the stability of supply chains.

The establishment of CAPS is a natural continuation of CEVRO University’s long-standing effort to be an active player in international political research and to provide expert perspectives on the key issues shaping today’s world. The creation of the center represents a logical step in response to the rapid development of Asia and the Pacific and the growing importance of these regions for Czech foreign policy, security, export orientation, and strategic partnerships. CAPS will work closely with other research initiatives at the university — such as the Center for Transatlantic Relations and the Center for Security Studies — and will remain open to international collaboration.

PERSON OF THE MONTH

George Yeo (1954)

George Yeo is a prominent Singaporean former politician and retired Brigadier-General. He served in the Government of Singapore for 23 years (1988–2011), holding several key ministerial portfolios, including Minister for Foreign Affairs (2004–2011), Minister for Trade and Industry (1999–2004), Minister for Health (1994–1997), and Minister for Information and the Arts (1991–1999).

As Minister for Trade and Industry, Yeo played a significant role in strengthening Singapore's economic and strategic ties with the United States, including the negotiation of the U.S.–Singapore Free Trade Agreement (signed in 2003). During his tenure as Foreign Minister, he was instrumental in expanding Singapore's multilateral diplomacy, strategic cooperation in security affairs, and participation in international coalitions, including efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, and maritime security.

Before entering politics, Yeo served in the Singapore Armed Forces, where he rose to the rank of Brigadier-General. He graduated in Engineering from Christ's College, University of Cambridge, and earned an MBA from Harvard Business School. In politics, he was a member of the People's Action Party (PAP) and represented the Aljunied Group Representation Constituency until 2011. He also chaired the Young PAP (1991–2000) and served as the Cabinet's representative for the Eurasian community.

Since leaving politics, George Yeo has remained active as a visiting scholar, author, business advisor, and a respected voice in global governance dialogues. He is widely recognized for his nuanced analyses of U.S.–China relations and his insights on the emerging multipolar international order.

CAPS IN MEDIA

Interview with Director Jan Železný on CAPS mission:

Česko se příliš soustředí na Čínu. Nové univerzitní centrum chce ukázat celou Asii

Info.cz coverage of the CAPS launching ceremony:

CEVRO otevírá Centrum asijsko-pacifických studií, promluvila i „rocková star“ asijské diplomacie Yeo

ČTK coverage of the CAPS launching ceremony:

Odborník: Asie nabývá na významu, Evropa musí přehodnotit své strategie

Comment on President Trump's new AI initiatives and their connection to Taiwan by Jan Železný:

Trumpův riskantní tah za 11 miliard: USA zkouší zkopírovat 50 let starý tchajwanský zázrak

Comment on the SCO summit and its results by Jan Železný:

Rusko, Čína a Indie snaží vymezit proti Západu a zároveň posilovat vlastní hospodářské a politické vazby

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Co-authored chapters by Jan Železný and Zdeněk Rod, in Routledge Handbook of China's Belt and Road Initiative in Eurasia:

https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Handbook-of-Chinas-Belt-and-Road-Initiative-in-Eurasia/Sahakyan-Lo/p/book/9781032840956

Commentary on the power competition in the Arctic by Jan Železný and Zdeněk Rod, at RAND Blog:

https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2025/09/cracks-in-the-ice-why-engaging-china-can-check-russian.html

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CAPS MONTHLY MONITORING

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