

South China Morning Post 南華早報

EU-China research centre opens in Belgium

Wednesday, 02 April, 2014, 11:51am

News › China TRADE

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Facility at College of Europe to study ‘rapidly developing relations between the European Union and China’

The College of Europe, a postgraduate institute that trains European leaders and diplomats, opened its EU-China Research Centre in Bruges, Belgium, on Tuesday

The opening came a day after Xi Jinping made the first visit by a Chinese president to the European Union’s headquarters in the historic city.

Xi, accompanied by his wife, Peng Liyuan, was on the final leg of a 10-day, four-nation tour of Europe, his first as president. The European Union has 28 member states and is China’s largest trading partner.

“The Centre aims to study the rapidly developing relations between the European Union and China by critical analysis and academic research,” the centre’s director, Jing Men said.

The centre will undertake research, produce publications, organise conferences and promote co-operation between scholars who specialise in EU-China studies, she added.

Following the inauguration ceremony, the centre and other institutions at the college began a two-day seminar on “China’s reform and its impact on the EU and the world”.



The newly opened China Library at the College of Europe. Photo: Xinhua

On Friday, the college inaugurated its China Library, providing about 10,000 books and audio-visual publications in six languages that were donated by China's State Council Information Office.

The College of Europe was founded in 1949 to promote "a spirit of solidarity and mutual understanding between all the nations of Western Europe". It has about 400 postgraduate students from more 55 countries.

Its famous alumni include Danish Prime Minister Thorning Schmidt Helle, the British Deputy Prime Minister Nicholas Clegg, and ambassadors from countries across Europe.

Sino-EU trade between has doubled since 2003 to 1 billion euros (HK\$10.5 billion) a day, and a number of important trade deals were announced during Xi's visit that included the Netherlands, France, Germany and Belgium.

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 11th 2014, 4:10pm):

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1463058/eu-china-research-centre-opens-belgium>