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En este número:

- Los objetivos de la iniciativa OBOR…
- … y los del AIIB.
- El motor de crecimiento son las empresas privadas, no las estatales.
- Las fábricas chinas promueven la globalización, no los gobiernos.
- China extrae hielo combustible, energía alternativa.
- Estados Unidos ¿traspasa tecnología a China?
- Este año, China será el mayor inversor externo en Brasil.
- Reforma en el ingreso universitario para mejorar educación.

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¿Qué es lo que dirige la iniciativa "Una Franja Una Ruta"?

Es el primer mayor intento de China para diseñar e implementar una estrategia mercantil e inter continental que tendrá consecuencias globales y geopolíticas. Es producto del pensamiento neomercantilista que busca una salida para la sobreinversión interna y promueve una globalización liderada por el gobierno destinada a acumular riqueza y poder.

What's driving China's One Belt, One Road initiative?

By Junhua Zhang, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

EastAsiaForum—September 2016

Since 2013, the 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) initiative has become the centrepiece of China's economic diplomacy. The essence of OBOR is to promote regional and cross-continental connectivity between China and Eurasia. The 'One Belt' and 'One Road' refer to China's proposed 'Silk Road Economic Belt' and 'Maritime Silk Road'. Connectivity covers five major areas of interest: policy coordination, infrastructure construction (including railways and highways), unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people ties. Among these, infrastructure construction is the dominant feature of the New Silk Road.

While the historical Silk Road was an upshot of bottom-up trade activities, driven mainly by nations outside China, the OBOR initiative is designed by China's ruling elites. It represents the first major attempt by China to design and implement a cross-continental mercantile strategy and will surely have significant global and geopolitical consequences.

OBOR is a product of Chinese neomercantilist thinking. Today's neomercantilism differs from the mercantilism of the 17th to early 20th century, when merchants were often complicit in the imperialism of the great powers in pursuit of increased political power and private wealth. Neomercantilism today is much more constrained, thanks to national and international legal frameworks, reluctance to engage in armed conflicts, as well as a greater widespread appreciation of human rights.

Chinese neomercantilism endorses global trade and its institutions while also pursuing a government-led globalisation strategy to accumulate capital and wealth for the nation. China's strategy clearly preferences state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and is focused on establishing free trade areas – similar to the China–ASEAN Free Trade Area which came into effect in 2010 – with Central Asia and South Asia.

So what is driving China's OBOR initiative?

Many of China's production sectors have been facing overcapacity since 2006. The Chinese leadership hopes to solve the problem of overproduction by exploring new markets in neighbouring countries through OBOR. The OBOR initiative will provide more opportunities for the development of China's less developed border regions. China also intends to explore new investment options that preserve and increase the value of the capital accumulated in the last few decades. OBOR has the potential to grow into a model for an alternative rule-maker of international politics and could serve as a vehicle for creating a new global economic and political order.

But there are significant risks associated with China's OBOR strategy. China's neomercantilism lacks sensitivity when addressing some issues in host countries, particularly regarding culture, environment and ethnicity. Beijing's authoritarian approach may also impede effective cooperation with democratic countries

The China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project is a prime example of the risks and challenges facing China. CPEC is a combination of transport and energy projects and includes the development of a major deep-sea port offering direct access to the Indian Ocean and beyond. Plans for CPEC were officially formalised in April 2015. According to the agreements of both sides, total costs for the projects currently under construction amount to US$46 billion. Should all the planned projects be implemented, the combined value of the projects would be equal to all foreign direct investment in Pakistan since 1970, and would be equivalent to 17 per cent of its 2015 GDP.

The Chinese leadership sees Pakistan as one of its most longstanding and committed allies. This is why CPEC is being treated as a poster child for the OBOR initiative. Still, many uncertainties exist which could topple the project. CPEC faces domestic political opposition in Pakistan, with infighting between provinces and the central government over the allocation of investment. A more serious issue is that of security. On the Chinese side, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) is hindering Chinese efforts, while on the Pakistani side the Pakistani Taliban and other anti-state militant groups pose an immense threat to construction crews and could disrupt the flow of goods.

With this in mind, in the short term, China's OBOR initiative will likely only deliver very modest results despite immense investments. It is still hard to predict whether China's OBOR projects will be effective over the medium-to-long term as this depends on the responsiveness of both governments to challenges, as well as the external environment.

Still, OBOR marks the beginning of a new economic diplomacy for China as it shifts towards being an active driver of the regional and global economy. Whether China's neomercantilist expansion policy will meet expectations, remains to be seen.

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El jefe del AIIB revela el propósito de rivalizar con prestamistas como el ADB y el World Bank

Los préstamos del banco llegaron a los u$s250.000 y propone expandirse y ser reconocido como un miembro responsable de la comunidad internacional, posicionándose para trabajar con los EE.UU y Japón.

AIIB chief unveils aim to rival lenders such as ADB and World Bank

Jin Liqun says the institution can already lend up $250bn.

By James Kynge

Financial Times - 3/5/2017

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is a newcomer with big ambitions. The Chinese-led institution cannot only already lend up to $250bn for infrastructure and other projects. It also wants to expand into a global body to rival long-established multilateral lenders.

At the same time, it is trying to cultivate a distinctive modus operandi. Unlike the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), it has no overarching objective to reduce poverty. China is also set to surrender its de facto veto power over the bank's significant decisions but hopes to burnish its reputation with a new philosophy on development finance.

"I'm a Chinese national and I am very much patriotic, but I'm not of a very narrow nationalist mind," says Jin Liqun, the AIIB's president. "China needs to do something which can help it be recognised as a responsible member of the international economic community and maybe in the future be recognised as a responsible leader.

"If I do well, that will enhance China's credibility, but if this institution does not follow the international best practice, who will believe the Chinese leaders in the future?" adds Mr Jin, a former vice-president of the ADB and vice minister of finance in China.

The journey towards such leadership has only just begun. Since it began business at the start of 2016, the bank has lent just over $2bn, a drop in the ocean compared to the $684bn in loans outstanding from China's two largest bilateral development banks – the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China – at the end of 2014.

It represents a similar fraction of the $700bn in loans outstanding at the end of 2014 from the World Bank and five other western-backed multilateral development banks – the ADB, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the African Development Bank, according to a study by Boston University academics.

Mr Jin says he expects a rapid scaling up of business in coming years, noting that the bank is authorised to lend up to 2.5 times its capital of $100bn. "Which means that if this bank builds a very solid foundation, we don't have to have a capital increase, we can do $250bn – the same as the World Bank today," Mr Jin says.

Such ambitions are mirrored in the AIIB's membership roster, which was launched with regional nations such as South Korea, Singapore and Australia and further-flung countries including the UK, Norway and Germany.

In March, 13 countries – including Canada, Ireland and Ethiopia – were approved as prospective members to join the bank's existing 57 members. This fills out the institution's global footprint and reinforces China's increasingly international agenda even as Donald Trump, the US president, rails against the ills of economic globalisation.

The more countries that join the AIIB, the starker the two big absences – of the US and Japan – appear.

The US initially opposed the AIIB's establishment, sharply criticising the UK for "constant accommodation" of China when London announced in 2015 that it would join. But Mr Jin is keeping the door open.

"Regardless of membership, the US and Japan – we can work together," he says, speaking in the British-accented English he first picked up from BBC radio broadcasts he tuned into as a farm labourer during Chairman Mao's Cultural Revolution.

"You don't have to worry about your membership; you may not be able to join for various reasons. But the door [to membership] has flung open and will remain that way. I don't have to say 'I invite you'."

Once all applicants have joined, China is prepared to lose the current de facto veto it wields over the AIIB's important decisions as the only member with a voting share of over 25 per cent. "When we have another group of countries joining, China's voting power will go below 25 per cent," he says, noting that the US has resisted such a loss of veto within the International Monetary Fund.

Much of the way the AIIB is structured derives from the best practice witness by Mr Jin while working at the ADB and World Bank. But there is one significant philosophical point of difference: the Chinese-led bank does not regard poverty reduction as its prime objective but rather as a desirable spin-off of infrastructure construction. "Look at China: a rising tide raises all the boats," he says. "If you read the articles of the AIIB, there is nothing about the overarching objectives of poverty reduction."

Therefore, although the AIIB often lends alongside the World Bank and ADB, its mission remains broadly to build things that generate a commercial return or upgrade economic efficiency. Power station projects, roads, railways, urban development and telecoms are areas of particular interest.

But there are some tricky decisions to be taken. China has been one of the world's biggest backers of coal-fired power stations, lending $40.4bn to such projects between 2000 and 2016, according to a database maintained by Boston University's Global Economic Governance Initiative. The biggest recipients of Chinese loans for such power plants have been India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Ukraine and Pakistan.

The technology remains popular because, in spite of the grave pollution produced, coal is one of the cheapest sources of electricity. In addition, China has the wherewithal to construct coal-fired plants more cheaply than any other country.

Analysts familiar with the AIIB's internal discussions say that the institution has yet to decide whether to allow the financing of coal-fired power stations. To do so would leave the bank open to criticism that it is exporting pollution and undermining the "best practice" to which Mr Jin aspires.

However, to ban such lending would not only cut off a significant source of demand among recipient nations, it would also displease China's powerful energy industry, which is looking to expand its global footprint.

El motor del crecimiento de China son las empresas privadas no las estatales

Las firmas privadas son las principales fuentes del crecimiento y la inversión industrial y en los últimos años de más de la mitad de las exportaciones. Contradiciendo los lugares comunes, China tiene menos empleados públicos por habitante que países desarrollados y las empresas privadas reciben más crédito que las estatales.

Private not state firms are China's growth engine

By Nicholas R. Lardy

East Asia Forum – 30 November 2016

Virtually every dimension of China's economic success over the past three-and-a-half decades can be attributed largely to the rise of markets and private businesses. Private firms account for almost all the growth in employment, most of the expansion of output and investment in manufacturing, and in recent years for over half of the growth in exports. Because they are more productive, private firms have largely displaced state firms in sectors that are open to entry. State firms remain completely dominant only in natural monopolies, such as electric power and rail transport, and in sectors where entry is restricted: upstream oil and gas, financial services, and telecommunications.

China has not developed a successful alternative model of economic growth. The pursuit of what some call 'state capitalism' has significantly reduced, rather than enhanced, China's economic growth. Where China has relied primarily on the market – agriculture, most of manufacturing, and in services such as retailing and restaurants – success has been obvious.

In coming to these conclusions my recent book Markets over Mao: The Rise of Private Business in China corrects four important misperceptions or myths about the Chinese economy. The first is that China's economy is dominated by state firms. The reality is very different. State firms now account for only one-fifth of manufacturing output, compared to four-fifths when reform began. They account for only one-tenth of investment in manufacturing. State firms in all sectors account for only one-tenth of urban employment and only one-tenth of China's exports.

The second misperception is that China has one of the world's most powerful bureaucracies in terms of employment. Combined employment by government and party organs, including government agencies and public institutions as well as party bodies, including those employed at the central, provincial, and sub-provincial level, is about 40 million. This is greater than the population of many states. But the International Labor Organization, which measures government employment per 1000 residents, puts France in the clear lead with 95 employees per 1000 residents, the United States 74, Germany 53, Turkey and Mexico each 38, South Africa 32, while China has only

The third misperception is that while state-owned enterprises are fewer in number, these firms are more powerful than ever. In particular, those who are critical of what they see as China's model of state capitalism charge that central SOEs earn astronomical profits, given the monopolies and protected markets they enjoy. Industrial policies in the Hu–Wen decade certainly seemed to favour state firms, especially those under the purview of the State Asset Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), established in 2003 just as Hu and Wen assumed office.

By 2013 the profits of SASAC's enterprises had quadrupled, seemingly supporting the view that SASAC was successfully creating 'national champions'. Less noticed, the share of profits of all non-financial corporations accruing to SASAC's firms fell slightly — they actually underperformed. More importantly, the return on assets of SASAC firms for the past six years has been persistently far less than their cost of capital. By 2013 the gap was 3.8 per cent compared to 6.8 per cent. In short, SASAC firms have been a huge drag on China's growth.

The fourth misperception is that private firms get little access to credit. As the Financial Times put it earlier this year, private firms 'are typically starved of cash. Meanwhile the larger state-owned enterprises enjoy easy access to loans'. The reality is quite different. According to data released by the People's Bank of China, private firms received 52 per cent of all credit flowing to firms from 2010–2012, while the share of state firms was only 32 per cent. This should not be a surprise. Given the much higher return on assets generated by private industrial firms, their interest coverage ratio, a common measure of credit worthiness, is more than twice that of state companies.

The implications of this analysis are fundamentally optimistic for China's growth over the medium term, if the reforms announced at the Third Plenum last year are actually carried out. As already noted, state firms don't dominate China's economy, but they are still a substantial drag on its growth. This is because their average return on assets is not only well below that of private firms, but substantially less than the cost of capital. For example, in upstream oil and gas more than 90 per cent of output is produced by China's three national oil companies. But Sinopec and PetroChina, which together account for three-quarters of the assets of these three firms, have returns less than half that of Exxon-Mobile and Chevron. In services, the return on assets of state firms is only half that of private service providers. China Unicom and China Telecom earn only 2 per cent and 4 per cent, respectively, substantially below the cost of capital. Services now absorb over half of all investment but the state share of services investment is four times that in manufacturing.

The party's pledge at the Third Plenum to eliminate all but natural monopolies, if implemented, will create enormous opportunities for new private firms in upstream oil and gas and for private service providers, not just in telecoms and financial services, but in other modern business services. This will reduce a substantial misallocation of capital and support China's growth over the medium term.

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This article appeared in the most recent edition of the East Asia Forum Quarterly, 'The state and economic enterprise'.

Olvide Trump y Xi, las fábricas pelearán y conquistarán el mercado global

Más allá de las políticas de los gobiernos de China y EE.UU. miles de fabricantes chinos trabajan para penetrar el mercado mundial. Por el aumento de costos algunos invierten en el exterior pero otras industrias, como electrónica, maquinaria industrial y otros segmentos se concentran en china por la importancia de las cadenas de suministros y del trabajo especializado.

China's exporters are the real foot soldiers of globalization

Forget Trump and Xi, the factories will fight and conquer in the global marketplace

By Ben Bland in Guangzhou

Financial Times – 23/4/2017

Like to travel? Sick of dragging your luggage around? Then why not buy a suitcase that doubles as an electric scooter, yours for the wholesale price of $250. Minimum order: one shipping container.

This somewhat hare-brained invention, which was on sale at China's biggest trade fair in Guangzhou last week, is unlikely to become the Model T Ford of its era.

But the crowd of intrigued buyers from Europe, the US and Latin America enquiring about it was testament to the enterprising spirit of China's much-derided manufacturers, who will try and try again until they get it right.

In Davos in January, China's President Xi Jinping projected himself as the defender of economic globalisation, in deliberate contrast to the protectionism promoted (if not yet implemented) by his US counterpart Donald Trump.

While his speech won him plaudits from western commentators, Mr Xi is not a very convincing poster boy for free trade, as he looks to increase state control over the Chinese economy and makes life harder for foreign investors.

The 20,000 Chinese manufacturers who came to the semi-annual Canton Fair this year to promote their wares to about 200,000 international buyers are much better role models for globalisation.

China is the world's biggest exporter of manufactured goods and the fair is its vast and boisterous showroom, selling everything from bath fittings to smartphones.

While the US economy is rebounding, the threat of Mr Trump's promised protectionist measures looms large

While some of the exhibitors are state-owned and many have benefited from some form of government support, they live and die by global demand for their products.

So their sales managers learn English, their technicians re-engineer assembly lines to cut costs and manufacturing times and their product development teams keep tinkering until they work out how to satisfy the needs of their customers.

As wages — and hence production costs — have risen rapidly in China over the past decade, manufacturers have had to become even more nimble. They have started using more industrial robots, rolling out new products more quickly to meet the demand of fast-moving retailers such as Amazon and Zara, and taking on more of the research and development work.

At the Canton Fair, you can find aluminium producers who have become suitcase makers after commodity prices slumped, struggling garden tool manufacturers who have jumped on the hoverboard craze and bicycle factories trying to reinvent themselves as tech companies to tap into the bike-sharing phenomenon.

Many fail. But more succeed. And, as South Korea and Japan found in their phases of rapid industrialisation, exporting forces them to become competitive.

As Nanfu, China's biggest maker of alkaline batteries, sees sales growth level off in China because of the wider economic slowdown, it is embracing the need to go global.

Russell Kong, the company's international business director, admits that its products are not as good as Duracell or Energizer. But he wants to take them on in their home markets because "it forces us to get to the same level as them".

The global environment is difficult. While the US economy is rebounding, the threat of Mr Trump's promised protectionist measures looms large. Demand in Europe remains sluggish. The slowdown in China has damped consumer spending in commodity-dependent emerging markets such as Brazil, Indonesia and Nigeria.

Chinese factory bosses are picking their way through the morass, contract by contract.

In recent years, rising costs have prompted a growing number of manufacturers to shift some production to countries with cheaper wages such as Bangladesh and Vietnam, especially in the case of labour-intensive products such as shoes and garments.

But for electronics, industrial machinery and many other segments, production is becoming further concentrated in China because the depth of the supply chain, the size of the workforce and the decades of experience competing in global markets give it a strong gravitational pull.

An executive from a Chinese toy factory that supplies leading companies such as Hasbro puts it like this: "You might save some wage costs but no country can compete with the track record we have of producing to high standards, year in and year out, despite the ups and downs of the economy, the retail industry and commodity prices."

Whatever Presidents Trump and Xi say or do, China's exporting factories will continue fighting and growing in the global marketplace.

China tiene éxito en extraer hielo combustible en el Mar del Sur de China

Después de décadas de investigación extraen el material que es una alternativa a los combustibles fósiles aunque es el primer paso de un largo camino. (El hielo combustible es un material que se encuentra en el lecho del mar y en la tundra y que es inflamable como el etanol sólido).

China succeeds in mining combustible ice in South China Sea

May 18, 2017

Xinhua

GUANGZHOU - China has succeeded in collecting samples of combustible ice in the South China Sea, a major breakthrough that may lead to a global energy revolution, Minister of Land and Resources Jiang Daming said Thursday.

This is China's first success in mining flammable ice at sea, after nearly two decades of research and exploration, the minister said at a trial mining site in the Shenhu area of the South China Sea Thursday.

Combustible ice usually exists in seabed or tundra areas, which have the strong pressure and low temperature necessary for its stability. It can be ignited like solid ethanol, which is why it is called "combustible ice."

One cubic meter of "combustible ice", a kind of natural gas hydrate, is equal to 164 cubic meters of regular natural gas.

China found flammable ice in the South China Sea in 2007.

International scientific circles have predicted that the natural gas hydrate is the best replacement for oil and natural gas.

According to Zhong Ziran, head of the China Geological Survey Bureau, combustible ice is more environmentally friendly and large reserves exist.

Mining of combustible ice started in the 1960s, but China began research in 1998.

Trial mining of combustible ice in the Shenhu sea, about 320 kilometers southeast of Zhuhai City in Guangdong, started on March 28. Experts first tapped the natural gas hydrate at a depth of 1,266 meters underwater last Wednesday.

An average of 16,000 cubic meters of gas with high purity was extracted each day.

Experts believe that the success shows China has mastered combustible ice mining technology.

Natural gas hydrate is an efficient, abundant and clean energy and is also strategically important for future global energy development, the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council said in a congratulatory letter.

The success marks a historic breakthrough after nearly two decades of continuous efforts and independent innovations by China in theory, technology, engineering and equipment for natural gas hydrate exploration and exploitation, according to the letter.

It is a great technological breakthrough in accessing the deep sea, deep-sea exploration and exploitation, said the letter.

It is another landmark achievement by Chinese people to bravely scale new heights of science and technology, and will have a profound impact on driving the revolution in energy production and consumption.

However, this is merely a critical step in a very long journey, with a daunting task ahead, said the letter, encouraging the staff to promote the industrialization of natural gas hydrate exploration and exploitation.

"Many countries along the Maritime Silk Road have a demand for combustible ice mining," said Qiu Haijun, director of the trial mining commanding headquarters.

"With the advanced technology we could help resolve the energy resource problem and boost economic development and exchanges between countries," Qiu said.

¿Estados Unidos traspasa el liderazgo en alta tecnología a China?

Apple abrirá un nuevo centro de investigación en China siguiendo otras empresas de alta tecnología. Esto no es una amenaza porque el porcentaje de traslado es reducido y es parte de la extensión de la red hacia también otros países.

Is the United States offshoring high-tech leadership to China?

By: Andrew Kennedy

East Asia Forum—17 May 2017

In March, Apple announced it would establish two new research and development (R&D) centres in China, to accompany two other centres it announced last year. In doing so, Apple joined a growing list of US high-tech companies that have established an R&D presence in China over the past two decades, including Microsoft, Google, Oracle and Intel.

Americans have long worried about the offshoring of US manufacturing jobs to China – fears that Donald Trump exploited to become President. So is the United States on the verge of becoming reliant on China for R&D as well?

The answer is no – for several reasons.

First, while US corporate R&D is globalising, it is doing so very slowly. Between 2000 and 2010, for example, the share of US corporate R&D performed within the United States fell from 88 per cent to 84 per cent. The very gradual nature of the shift reflects a number of constraints: the complexity of managing global R&D networks, how embedded multinationals are in their home countries, and the local infrastructure and intellectual property protection that core R&D can require, among others.

Second, US firms conduct R&D in many countries around the world — and China is still low on the list. In 2013, US firms spent more on R&D in eight other countries than they did in China, with Germany and the UK leading the way.

To be sure, a given R&D dollar will go farther in some countries than others, so if China were particularly cheap this kind of data would understate its importance. But China is not cheap. A few years ago, a survey reported that junior R&D staff were 25 to 30 per cent cheaper in China than in the United States or Europe, that middle managers were equally expensive, and that senior managers could cost 20 to 25 per cent more in China because of short supply.

Nor is the United States heavily reliant on China as a source of collaborative ventures between firms and other organisations conducting research. From 2000 to 2014, US organisations concluded 2259 R&D alliances, and 1296 of those involved foreign partners, according to the Thomson Reuters SDC Platinum database. Western European countries accounted for half of those, while China accounted for seven per cent.

Third, China is hardly an ideal host country for multinational technology firms' R&D. A recent survey found that 80 per cent of US firms operating in China were concerned about data and IT security policies. The concern was not simply about the protection of intellectual property — although that was certainly an important source of anxiety. There were also serious concerns about the quality of the internet service in China, the availability of global IT solutions, restrictions on cross-border data flows and restrictions on the use of virtual private networks.

And fourth, overseas R&D often complements the work done at home, rather than substituting for it. Firms doing R&D abroad may be trying to tap into expertise not readily available in their home country, or they may be adapting products for foreign markets in an effort to promote local sales — a task more easily done in that market. Such adaptation may actually make a product less advanced. One global wind power firm, for example, re-designed its gearbox in China to make it less expensive — but in doing so it cut the durability of the product in half.

In short, even as China attracts more and more foreign R&D activity, the country has yet to become a vital partner for the United States in this regard.

But this is no call for complacency. The United States faces real challenges sustaining its scientific and technological leadership, but those challenges come from within. The Trump administration's proposal to slash funding for scientific research – including an 18 per cent cut to the National Institutes of Health – ignores decades of bipartisan support for basic scientific research in the United States.

Anti-immigrant sentiment imperils US scientific leadership as well. The United States has long served as a magnet for the world's top talent in this regard. As of 2013, foreign-born individuals comprised an astounding 42 per cent of US workers in science and engineering professions with doctoral degrees. The more the United States is seen as unfriendly to immigrants, the more endangered that remarkable flow of human capital will be.

To hold onto technological leadership, the United States should worry less about high-tech jobs moving to China – and try harder not to shoot itself in the foot.

Andrew Kennedy is Senior Lecturer in Policy and Governance at the Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University. Follow him on Twitter at @andybkennedy. For more on this topic, see his latest article, 'Unequal Partners: US Collaboration with China and India in Research and Development', in Political Science Quarterly.

En 2017 China se convertirá en el mayor inversor externo en Brasil

China becomes Brazil's biggest investor so far in 2017

Xinhua - 2017-04-25

RIO DE JANEIRO – China is Brazil's biggest foreign investor so far this year, according to consulting firm Dealogic on Monday.

In the first four and half months of 2017, Chinese investors spent $5.67 billion on mergers and acquisitions, representing 37.5 percent of total investment in the country.

Chinese investment in Brazil up to mid-April amounts to nearly half of the $11.92 billion China spent in 2016.

Trailing China were Argentina and Netherlands, with $1.6 billion and $1.1 billion respectively.

The rise in Chinese investment comes at a time when Brazil is improving its trade balance with China, thanks to increased iron and petroleum exports.

Brazil's positive trade balance went from $1 billion in the first quarter of last year to $5.5 billion in the same period of this year, according to the Ministry of Industry and Foreign Trade.

Reforma de examen de ingreso a universidad busca mejorar futuro de estudiantes

18/05/2017

Xinhua

BEIJING - Coinciendo con la llegada del 'Gaokao", el muy competitivo examen de acceso a las universidades chinas, los expertos en educación sopesan el efecto de la reforma del sistema.

El examen es de importancia vital para millones de estudiantes y sus familias y múltiples otros interesados, dijo Tan Songhua, del centro de investigación de desarrollo educativo del Ministerio de Educación de China.

Es de la mayor importancia que las modificaciones al sistema se practiquen de manera prudente y firme y resuelvan los conflictos de intereses, añadió.

En un artículo publicado ayer martes, Tan indicó que la reforma necesita aportar profesionalidad al sistema de matriculación de estudiantes y que el personal reciba formación sobre procedimientos de registro y resolución de disputas.

La coordinación entre el gobierno, las escuelas y la sociedad es necesaria, tanto como satisfacer los intereses de las distintas regiones y grupos étnicos.

La prueba anual dura dos o tres días y los resultados que se obtengan determinan en gran medida el futuro académico de los estudiantes.

El examen ha sido criticado por poner un énfasis excesivo en las notas y forzar la división entre ciencia y letras, dos vías entre las que los estudiantes deben optar durante las primeras etapas.

En 2017 la situación será distinta, sin embargo. Las modificaciones propuestas inicialmente en septiembre de 2014 se implementarán plenamente antes de 2020 y afectarán no sólo el propio examen, sino también al registro universitario.

Las regiones piloto de Shanghai y Zhejiang serán las primeras que notarán los efectos de las nuevas medidas. Los estudiantes que empezaron el bachillerato superior en 2014, el primer año de la reforma, participarán en el ”Gaokao” este año. El nuevo proceso fue definido oficialmente por el ayuntamiento de Shanghai en marzo.

La reforma equilibra la ponderación asignada a escuelas y estudiantes a la hora de optar por las plazas universitarias preferidas. Antes de la reforma se daba la mayor preferencia a la institución elegida por los estudiantes y se consideraba secundaria la especialidad elegida.

Ahora, los estudiantes tienen más opciones entre las que elegir y se da la misma importancia a los estudios que prefieran.

”Esto quiere decir que la opinión de los estudiantes sobre su futuro tiene más peso”, explicó Zhou Hong, responsable de matriculación de la NYU Shanghai. ”Los estudiantes tienen más posibilidades de acceder a sus estudios preferidos y sus sueños académicos”.

”También significa que tienen que pensar más detenidamente por qué carrera optar”, añadió.

Las modificaciones al sistema de solicitud se debieron a los cambios en los exámenes. En Shanghai, por ejemplo, los exámenes de ciencias y letras ya no se dividen rígidamente en dos bloques mutuamente excluyentes.

Wu Jiang de la Universidad Tongji en Shanghai, opinó que los cambios acabarán con las etiquetas de ”estudiantes de letras” y ”estudiantes de ciencias”.

”Nuestros estudiantes ideales tienen conocimientos de ambos campos”, señaló.

El vicepresidente de la Universidad Normal de Este de China (ECNU), Zhou Aoying, se mostró de acuerdo. ”Los alumnos pueden optar ahora a más carreras porque hay menos limitaciones”, indicó.

El nuevo sistema también tiene sus opositores, no obstante. Chen, un estudiante de secundaria superior de la ciudad oriental de Hangzhou, es uno de los muchos que están perplejos por las modificaciones.

Para un estudiante de bachillerato es muy difícil decidir su futuro a esta edad, protestó su madre.

Para los educadores, las reformas han elevado los estándares.

En su artículo, Tan asegura que las reformas ya han obligado a los sectores de la educación básica, la superior y la formación profesional a realizar cambios.

”Los institutos, escuelas secundarias e incluso las primarias deben ahora ayudar a los estudiantes a explorar en qué dirección querrán desarrollar su futuro”, avisó Chen Jun, director de una es-

escuela secundaria de Shanghai.

Wu Zunmin, profesor de la ECNU, dijo que los institutos deben de estar a la altura. ”Las universidades deben revisar sus sistemas de matriculación de acuerdo con la reforma del Gaokao”.

Su opinión es compartida por el subdirector de la Academia de Ciencias Educativas de Shanghai, Hu Wei, que subrayó que los institutos han de proporcionar mejores especialidades y perfeccionar la calidad de la educación.

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