

UNIVERSITY OF MACAU  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES  
DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNMENT AND  
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**THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE  
TAIWAN STRAIT RELATIONS  
(1996-2009) - A CONTENT ANALYSIS**

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**Abstract**

The author adopts the content analysis method to analyze the EU's cross-Strait policy from 1996 to 2009. During this period of time the EU has shown increasing attention to this flash point in East Asia. Out of geo-strategic reasons, the EU has less strategic interests in this region than the US. Therefore trade and economic interests are high on the EU agenda. Nonetheless, the EU interests can only be secured through peace and stability between the two civil war rivals across the Taiwan Strait.

The entry of new member states into the EU since 2004 could have influenced its cross-Strait policy. Owing to firm adherence to democratic values, frictions between EU member states and China are incessant. This culminated in the abrupt canceling of the scheduled 11<sup>th</sup> Sino-EU summit meeting by Beijing due to Dalai Lama's Europe tour in 2008.

Thanks to the change of government in Taipei in May the same year, a new era of reconciliation with Beijing has begun. It spares China a free hand to tackle other issues of interest. Also China has been hit much less by the recent global financial crisis than the US and European countries. Yet, there is too much at stake for both China and the EU to be at odds with each other in the long run.

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