

AGREEMENT ON PROGRAM:
CHINA AND THE EU: ONE BELT, ONE ROAD
AND OTHER FORMS OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

PARTIES: 1. VERN' UNIVERSITY, ZAGREB, CROATIA
2. BEIJING VOCATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND MEDIA,
BEIJING, CHINA

A) PROGRAM TITLE AND ORGANIZERS

TITLE - China and the EU: One Belt, One Road and Other Forms of Economic and Cultural Cooperation

CONTENT - Two-week scholarship-based program for Chinese and Croatian students

Organizer: VERN' University, Zagreb, Hrvatska

In cooperation with: Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media, Beijing, China

B) ABOUT VERN' UNIVERSITY AND ITS CAPACITY FOR THE PROGRAM

VERN' University is the first private university in the Republic of Croatia, dedicated to the development of modern, interdisciplinary, and internationally oriented higher education. Based on the principles of excellence, innovation, and social responsibility, VERN' promotes scientific research, cooperation with the business sector, and active student involvement in real-world professional challenges.

As a university that combines academic excellence with practical knowledge, VERN' develops study programs aligned with the demands of the 21st-century labor market, especially in the fields of business, communication, information sciences, tourism, media, and new technologies.

C) ABOUT THE PROGRAM: CHINA AND THE EU – ONE BELT, ONE ROAD AND OTHER FORMS OF ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL COOPERATION

The scholarship program aims to enhance understanding of political, economic, and cultural relations between China and the European Union, with a special focus on Croatian-Chinese relations. The central theme is the "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR) initiative, a strategic project to strengthen international trade connectivity, investment, and cultural exchange. As an EU member state, Croatia actively participates in the initiative through infrastructure projects, tourism, education, and cultural diplomacy.

Program goals:

- Provide students with basic knowledge about the structure and policies of the European Union

- Explain the strategic objectives and implementation of China's OBOR initiative
- Analyze Croatian-Chinese political, economic, and cultural relations
- Promote intercultural understanding and academic cooperation between Croatia and China
- Enable students to directly engage with Croatian experts, institutions, and local culture

Language : English

Program period: March 2026

Program structure (teaching modules):

Week 1: Introduction to International Relations and OBOR

1. The European Union and China: geopolitical and economic context
2. One Belt, One Road: strategy and objectives
3. Cultural diplomacy and the role of communication / Visit to Končar plant/ Classical music concert
4. Meeting with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Croatia, Qi Qianjin
5. Field trip to Kumrovec

Week 2: Croatia as a bridge between the EU and China

1. Croatia's participation in OBOR
2. Political, economic, and cultural relations between Croatia and China
3. Field activities and cultural program /Pelješac Bridge, and Dubrovnik city walls

Program content:

Week 1: *Introduction to International Relations and OBOR*

1. **The European Union and China: Geopolitical and Economic Context**
 - Introduction to international relations
 - EU and its institutions
 - EU foreign policy towards Asia and China
2. **One Belt, One Road (OBOR): Strategy and Objectives**
 - History and development of OBOR
 - OBOR in the context of the global economy
 - Croatian companies
3. **Cultural Diplomacy and the Role of Education**
 - Cultural diplomacy through education and media
 - Music as a cultural bridge
 - Field trip to Kumrovec

Week 2: *Croatia as a bridge between the EU and China*

1. **Croatia's Participation in OBOR**
 - Projects: Pelješac Bridge and other initiatives within OBOR
 - Investments and cooperation in tourism, infrastructure, and science

2. Relations Between Croatia and China: Political, Economic, and Cultural Aspects

- History of diplomatic relations
- Role of the Chinese Embassy in Croatia

3. Field Activities and Cultural Program

- Field trip: Visit to Pelješac Bridge and Dubrovnik

Program Schedule

DAY	TOPIC / ACTIVITY
1.	Official opening, introductory lecture
2.	EU and international relations
3.	OBOR – concept, development and impact
4.	Cultural diplomacy, educational cooperation
5.	Visit to cultural institutions and meeting with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of Croatia, Qi Qianjin
6.	Field trip to Kumrovec
7.	Croatia and OBOR: infrastructure projects
8.	Visit to Croatian companies
9.	Investments and cooperation in tourism, infrastructure, and science
10.	Diplomatic and economic relations Croatia - China
11.	Field trip – Dubrovnik, Pelješac Bridge
12.	Field trip – Dubrovnik, Pelješac Bridge
13.	Final presentations and program evaluation

Explanation of the Visit to Končar within the "One Belt, One Road" Program

The visit to Končar gives Chinese students insight into two key sectors of the Croatian economy relevant to the One Belt, One Road initiative – infrastructure and high technology.

Končar is a regional leader in electrical equipment, with projects in over 130 countries, including collaborations with Chinese partners. Their expertise in infrastructure solutions directly aligns with the objectives of OBOR.

Explanation of the Visit to Dubrovnik and Pelješac Bridge

Pelješac Bridge is a prime example of EU-China infrastructure cooperation and symbolizes Croatia's integration with global markets. The bridge was built by the Chinese company CRBC and financed by EU funds. Visiting the Dubrovnik city walls includes elements of cultural diplomacy and international heritage (UNESCO).

Explanation of the field trip to Kumrovec

A visit to Kumrovec offers a deeper understanding of Croatian cultural heritage and the country's political history in the 20th century, especially through the legacy of Josip Broz Tito. The ethno-village authentically presents rural life in Croatia at the turn of the 20th century, providing students with insights into local customs, architecture, and traditions. This trip also enhances intercultural understanding and reflects the shared heritage of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Final Essay: China and the EU: One Belt, One Road – Cultural and Economic Cooperation

At the end of the program, students will write a final essay reflecting on the knowledge and experiences gained. The essay should analyze EU-China relations with an emphasis on the OBOR initiative and Croatia's role. Through examples such as Pelješac Bridge, tourism and infrastructure cooperation, and the visit to Končar, students will explore concrete Croatian participation in OBOR. The essay should also consider the role of cultural diplomacy through education, art, and music, as well as reflect on the overall value of the program for their education and understanding of global processes.

D) PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

5 VERN' lecturers and 1 lecturer or accompanying person from Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media + project coordinator (Asst. Prof. Tamara Kunić, PhD) and project advisor (Prof. Ivo Josipović, PhD)

Students from VERN' and other Croatian higher education institutions selected through an open call (up to 30, depending on the number of scholarships granted)

Students from Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media, up to 5 based on the College's decision

E) FINANCIAL PLAN – "ONE BELT, ONE ROAD SCHOLARSHIP"

All project costs are financed through the "One Belt, One Road" scholarships provided by the Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media and other sponsors.

The financial plan is based on the participation of up to 15 Croatian and 5 Chinese students (depending on scholarship availability) for a duration of 13 days (10 program days + arrival/departure + excursion to Dubrovnik).

The scholarship amount is €5,000 per student (for a minimum of 20 students).

The scholarship/participation fee covers the following:

- A. Accommodation in Zagreb for Chinese students and other participants (10 days)
- B. Meals – three meals daily
- C. Honoraria for lecturers, project coordinator, and advisor
- D. Travel and accommodation in Dubrovnik (2 days), including museum and site entrance fees (for 20 students + 5 faculty)
- E. One-day field trip to Kumrovec and nearby castles
- F. Miscellaneous – administrative costs.

Travel costs to Zagreb from China and from other parts of Croatia (for Croatian students not based in Zagreb) are covered by participants themselves.

Meals and accommodation for lecturers in Dubrovnik and for the accompanying Chinese lecturer are covered by scholarship funds.

Scholarship funds are transferred to the account of VERN' University, which then covers all listed expenses (A–E). The total amount of the scholarships for all participants shall be transferred after selection of students, latest March 1st, 2026.

F) CERTIFICATE AND ECTS CREDITS

Upon completion of the program, students will receive a joint certificate (in English, Chinese, and Croatian) issued by VERN' University and Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media. Participating higher education institutions may award ECTS credits according to their own regulations.

For VERN' students, participation will be recognized as part of their required internship and regulated through the University Internship Office.

G) OTHER PROVISIONS

1. Parties shall realise this Program in good faith, and all disputes shall be resolved by consensus of Parties.
2. The Agreement shall be in force from the day of the signature.

Signed in Zagreb, October 6th, 2025



For VERN' University
Prof. Vedran Mornar, Rector



For Beijing Vocational College of Art and Media
Principal Mr. Yang Bo