

CHARLES UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Master's Thesis

No Safe Harbour: Is Economic Reliance on the People's Republic of China Sinking Regional Foreign Policy Independence in the East-Asia Pacific?

ABSTRACT

This paper has been commissioned to explore the relationship between political and economic dependency of East-Asia Pacific nations, with a GDP (nominal) of over US\$100 billion, on China. Ten case nations were selected for analysis; Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam. Two separate metrics were created; the “*Economic Entanglement Index (EEI)*” and “*Political Dependency Index (PDI)*”, containing a total of six and five individual indicators each, respectively. Analysing this data, I was able to quantify the levels of political and economic dependency each of these ten case nations shared with China. Singapore was ranked as the most dependent nation in both categories while Japan ranked the least dependent for the EEI and tied with Australia for least dependent in the PDI. Both indexes were also combined to create an overall “*Sino-dependency score*”.

My analysis indicated a moderate correlation between the levels of economic and political dependency on China. In addition, a moderate inverse relationship between GDP (nominal) and levels of dependency was observed. No relationship between geographic distance from China and level of dependency could be ascertained. The nature of these relationships, such as how economic and political dependency interplay is discussed briefly but was not the focus of this research.

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