Entering a New Phase of Geopolitical De-Risking

18 OCTOBER 2025

Vincent Sipeer



Vincent Sipeer

Sister City Partnerships in the US as Gateways of Chinese Influence
Timeframe: 01/01/2018 – 01/01/2027
United States of America · International Cooperation · Issue VIII

Key Insights

- Can U.S. cities protect themselves from foreign influence? As Sino-U.S. sister city partnerships come under growing scrutiny, Vincent Sipeer

examines how local diplomacy has become an overlooked front in great power competition. He argues that while China's tightly coordinated system gives it an asymmetric advantage, the U.S. must not emulate authoritarian control. Instead, he calls for a new strategy of geopolitical de-risking—one that builds local capacity, strengthens multi-level coordination, and safeguards democratic integrity in city-to-city relations.

Definition

Sister city partnership: A formal, long-term cooperation of communities in different states.

As U.S.-China great power competition resurges, the era of naïve global engagement is over.

Documents: ☐ Full Publication (PDF) ☐ Source Document

DOI 10.69790/epis08.09273

EPIS