Top News

€2.5 billion available for Erasmus+ in 2017, a 13% increase compared to 2016 and record rise since the start of the Erasmus+ programme: The European Commission published its 2017 Call for Proposals for Erasmus+, the European Union's programme for education, training, youth and sport. For 2017, funds available for the programme have increased by almost €300 million compared to 2016, also representing a record annual rise of funds since the first year of the Erasmus+ programme (2014). This will benefit Erasmus students, but also teachers, apprentices, volunteers and young people involved in sport projects, while also supporting cooperation between education institutions, youth organisations and businesses. From today, organisations wishing to apply for funds can start to prepare their grant applications. More background information is available online.

Education

China and EU aim to create 'education Silk Road to future': China and EU education ministers have discussed building a joint “education Silk Road towards the future” and signed agreements on mutual recognition of degrees. The meeting, held in Beijing last week, also addressed “student exchanges and other important areas such as expanding cooperation between universities and enterprises and cultivating student entrepreneurs and innovation”, according to China’s Ministry of Education. TimesHigherEducation

Education agency refutes reports of application fraud: A Shanghai-based educational agency on Saturday rebutted a Reuters report that accused the agency of helping students cheat in their college applications and buying access to top US college admission officers, slamming it as sensationalism and an attempt to defame China’s education system. GlobalTimes

More young Chinese going abroad for studies – but more are also returning upon graduation: More young Chinese people are attending university abroad, with the United States, Australia and Britain among their top choices, a survey by a Chinese consultancy shows. The Education International Cooperation Group’s survey, published on 15th October, showed a 17 per cent increase in the number of students aged below 18 attending universities overseas last year, compared with that in 2012. Most of the students chose to study in the US, followed by Australia, Canada and Britain, Modern Express quoted the report as saying. SCMP

China to improve education service for elderly: China will offer more policy support to boost education services for its senior citizens, according to a plan released by the General Office of the State Council. The plan said China should establish a comprehensive elderly education system by 2020, with diversified teaching approaches and content. Communities, nursing houses and other elderly care facilities are encouraged to offer a range of courses, and the government will provide full support, including financial subsidies and IT services. ChinaDaily
China angered as Japan withholds UNESCO funding in history row: China said on 19 October that Japan had acted irresponsibly by withholding its 2016 funding for the UN heritage body UNESCO in a row over how the 1937 Nanjing Massacre is remembered. UNESCO last year decided to include documents about the massacre in its "Memory of the World" programme. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said the massacre was a serious crime and a historical fact recognised by the international community, and UNESCO was right to include it in the listing. StraitsTimes Xinhua

Culture

EU official expects EU culture diplomacy offers new opportunities for EU-China cultural collaboration: The culture sector has a great potential in the collaboration between EU and China, said Monica Urian de Sousa, programme manager at the Directorate General Education and Culture of the European Commission. Culture has always been one of the main topics addressed in the China-EU high-level people-to-people dialogue with very successful results, Urian told Xinhua in a recent interview here, during the second China Arts Festival in the European Union (EU). Xinhua

A look at what's on Chinese President Xi Jinping's shelves: During his speech at the Forum on Literature and Art in Beijing on 15 October, 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping called for writers to deepen their understanding of the significance of literature and art today. The president’s call had a huge impact. The past two years since his speech has seen the publication of a large amount of outstanding Chinese literary works. It's no secret that Xi has a passion for reading. On many different occasions he has mentioned literature from different cultures and countries. People

China's Netflix wannabes spend billions to win new viewers: Tomb-raiding soldiers and imperial court villains are leading the latest battlefront for China's Internet giants, which are pouring billions of dollars into new digital content to create the nation's answer to Netflix Inc. Streaming platforms from Baidu Inc., Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Tencent Holdings Ltd. are among more than a dozen vying for dominance in an industry forecast to expand almost 30 percent a year through 2020. Whereas Youtube-style videos and the odd pirated TV episode were once enough to draw web viewers, they’re now seeking -- and willing to pay up to 19.8 yuan ($2.95) a month to watch -- more compelling characters on original, professionally made TV and movies. Blomberg

Netflix says goodbye China for now amid regulatory challenges: Online streaming service provider Netflix is saying goodbye to China at least for the time being, citing strict regulations in the world’s second biggest economy as a key reason. “The regulatory environment for foreign digital content services in China has become challenging,” Netflix said in a letter to shareholders as it announced its third-quarter earnings on 17th October. SCMP

Dalian Wanda woos Hollywood with studio subsidies: China’s richest man is looking to court Hollywood studios with a new movie metropolis in the coastal city of Qingdao that will subsidise their production costs to the tune of $150m a year. The studio complex adds to a sprawling entertainment empire assembled by Wang Jianlin, chairman of Dalian Wanda group. It includes a $3.5bn stake in Legendary Entertainment;
the largest theatre chain in mainland China; and AMC Theatres, set to be the biggest chain in the US once it completes the acquisition of Carmike Cinemas. FT

**Wang Jianlin: does China's richest man have a plan to take over Hollywood?:** China’s richest man, Wang Jianlin, didn’t mince words in a major address to Hollywood on 17 October. “Hollywood, which is famous for its storytelling, apparently is not as good as it used to be in telling stories,” he said, citing the industry's obsession with sequels and remakes. “Those sequels might have worked before, but Chinese audiences are more sophisticated now. If you want to participate in the growing Chinese market, you must improve film quality.” TheGuardian

**A Chinese company offers a carrot to Hollywood:** Wang Jianlin, chairman of the Dalian Wanda Group, the Chinese conglomerate that is emerging — controversially — as a superpower in the entertainment business, sat in an opulent armchair at the Peninsula Hotel here on the 16th of October and discussed his business ventures with a casual efficiency. His response to criticism from a member of Congress that Wanda, after a spectacular $8 billion shopping spree in Hollywood, is a propaganda threat and should be subject to more Justice Department scrutiny? It is “not like we are invading,” Mr. Wang said, contending that Wanda’s goal involves “helping” American film companies “to get more market share in the emerging movies market that is China.” NYTimes

**Christie's opens Chinese flagship in Beijing:** Christie’s has opened its new central Beijing flagship, together with an exhibition on Pablo Picasso and other Chinese artists, amid a continued expansion in China. The flagship location, Christie’s second venue in China after its Shanghai branch that opened in 2014, opened on 15 October and will serve as an auction house’s offices, as well as a multifunctional and interactive venue for exhibitions, art forums, lectures and other activities, the company says. People

**Police recover 300 million yuan worth of stolen Sichuan relics:** China’s Ministry of Public Security announced on 13 October that police have broken up 10 criminal gangs that were involved in the theft of cultural relics and recovered artifacts worth 300 million yuan ($44.6 million), bringing a massive two-year investigation to an end. Seventy suspects have been arrested in connection with illegal underwater excavations at the Jiangkou Chenyin site in the Minjiang River in Sichuan province. Caixin

**Welcome to 'Little Hannover':** £330million town styled after the German city is unveiled in China: From a mini Eiffel Tower to a fake English town, China has seen a craze of copying European landmarks in the past two decades or so. And the trend doesn’t seem to be slowing down. Changde, a city of five million people in southern China, has just unveiled its latest tourist attraction: a German district styled after the old town of Hannover. The 'Little Hannover', reportedly costing €370 million (£330 million) to build, opened to the public on the 18th of October. DailyMail

Gender

**Most Chinese provinces roll out official paid paternal leave in wake of two-child policy:** Not even a year ago, having an unapproved second child under China’s three-decade-old one-child policy would have incurred hefty fines of tens of or even hundreds of thousands of yuan. But, on the 16th of October, the government is so desperate to
encourage couples to make babies that fathers are being granted generous paid leave. Faced with a gloomy future of a rapidly ageing society and shrinking labour pool, Beijing announced late last year that all couples could now have two children, following a partial relaxation in 2012. SCMP

Sport

**Beijing trying overcome obstacles facing Winter Olympic preparation:** Pollution and the lack of winter sports specialists are the main challenges facing the preparations for the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games, and Beijing is working hard to find solutions. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Coordination Commission held talks with the Beijing 2022 Organizing Committee and visited Olympic venues in Zhangjiakou, Yanqing and central Beijing during their three-day meeting which started on 10 October, the Xinhua News Agency reported. GlobalTimes

**China expels nine Uyghur children from soccer talent program:** Authorities in the northern Chinese province of Hebei have ordered a regional soccer club to expel nine youth trainees of Uyghur ethnicity, citing "counterterrorism" concerns, leaving them potentially with nowhere to go, RFA has learned. Hengshui Power Football Club received applications for training contracts from promising youngsters from across China following a nationwide recruitment drive, among them nine members of the mostly Muslim, Turkic-speaking Uyghur group, who won places on the scheme. RFA