

**NATIONALISM IN CHINA:
IDEOLOGY AND
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS**

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Executive Summary

1. In the past decades, the international community has kept a close watch on the rise of Chinese nationalism as nationalistic sentiments could shape China's future.
2. Public opinion surveys provide a systematic overview of nationalistic attitudes of the general public. In the web-based Chinese Political Compass Survey that explores Chinese internet users' ideological spectrum, respondents were asked their views of the nation and the national political authorities, as well as their attitudes towards many political, economic and cultural issues.
3. Results show that Chinese nationalism is associated with conservative ideologies in politics, economy and culture. A nationalist in China generally supports an authoritarian government, puts a high premium on national unity and security, endorses a stronger role of the state in socioeconomic issues and values traditional cultures.
4. Wealth reduces nationalistic inclinations. People with higher income are generally less nationalistic. This is possibly because the rich interacts more frequently with the government and people of other countries, broadening their mind-set towards political authorities and the outside world.
5. Education is negatively related to nationalism. Those who received higher education are less likely to be nationalistic than those who did not finish high school.
6. The oldest and youngest cohorts are more nationalistic than those in their middle age. For the oldest group, their strong national identification may be a result of their memory or experience of China's historic humiliation and recent rise.
7. The highly nationalistic youths do not necessarily mean they will become more nationalistic in future. Those in school age are apt to accept officially indoctrinated views, but they may not keep the strong nationalistic sentiments in the later stage

of their life. Those with better education and higher income tend to become more moderate when they become older.

8. Nationalism is a double-edged sword for the Chinese government. While it provides a source of legitimacy for the regime, conservative views of nationalists in political, economic and cultural issues may run against Beijing's modernisation and economic growth plans.
9. Chinese leaders may want to nurture a more rational version of nationalism to the citizens. For a nation to continue to remain prosperous, it needs citizens with critical thinking and a love for the nation, and are open to various values and beliefs of other nations.