



第二期支持中欧人员往来和移民领域对话项目

Vacancy Notice

Position Title: Consultant
Duty Station: IOM Beijing Office
Duration: 5 months
Estimated Start Date: Immediate
Closing Date: 3 June 2020

IOM Introduction:

Established in 1951, IOM is a Related Organization of the United Nations, and as the leading UN agency in the field of migration, works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants.

Terms of Reference

1. Nature of the consultancy

The objective of the research is to increase Chinese and European Union (EU) as well as Schengen countries' knowledge of visa regimes worldwide and provide the ground field for a strengthened dialogue between China and the EU to encourage the streamlining of visa related processes as a means of easing regular travel and mobility. The increased flow of travellers between the EU and China for different purposes such as tourism, business and investment, education and cultural engagement, among others, calls for the need to better understand different visa regimes, the factors which may facilitate the visa issuance process and the challenges that may arise as a result of the overall complexity of visa application, specific requirements, fees, or other factors.

The challenge of visa policies is to regulate and safeguard cross border movements while not incurring in inefficiencies or excessive requirements, in terms of time or money, which may potentially discourage travellers. To continue facilitating mobility between the EU and China there is, therefore, a need to further strengthen the dialogue on visa regimes as not only a tool for border security but also to minimise discouraging legitimate travellers, whether it is for leisure, business, family or other purposes, who can offer economic benefits, skills, people-to-people contacts and cultural exchanges.

2. Purpose of the research

The research will be developed in the framework of the '*EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project Phase II*', funded by the Partnership Instrument (PI) of the EU and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in China. This research will contribute to MMSPII first specific objective, which is: "*to support the EU-China Mobility and Migration Dialogue (MMD), including the*



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implementation of the second phase of the MMD Roadmap and its ongoing negotiations (on Visa Facilitation Agreement (VFA) and cooperation in combatting illegal migration (CIMA)), contributing to better management of migration and mobility between the EU and China”.

The study will provide Chinese and European stakeholders with current processes, international best practices and other aspects of short-term visa regimes in China, the EU and selected third countries. It will also provide a background introduction to the latest data and information available on travel trends between China and the EU¹. The comparative study will shed light on pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses of different visas regimes and potentially attempt to identify vulnerabilities to fraudulent practices. However, given the security considerations of the latter, this will be confirmed during the first stage of the research and it might be limited to anecdotal testimonies gathered during the interviews as well as to the review of available government reports.

Against the backdrop of the current global pandemic caused by the outbreak of COVID-19, the research will also briefly analyse how this situation has impacted visa issuance processes in the countries taking part of this study. The report will provide insights on the need to balance health, humanitarian, political, economic and security considerations in emergency situations such as the current one.

3. Research Approach

The study should provide a context and compare visa issuing practices for short-term travel (tourism including ADS groups, business, family visit, researchers, journalists, youth exchanges, cultural and sports events, conferences, medical treatment etc.) by China (in Europe), the EU MS (in China) and third countries. The study should look into up to 5 or 6 EU MS, where the bulk of Schengen visas are issued, and of which 1 or 2 of those MS with less traffic visa issuance to see the differences. Non- EU countries may include Australia, Canada, Japan, the US, the UK and New Zealand, and an emerging country that allows a correlation analysis between visa policy and economic and investment policy.² In addition to the visa processing comparison, the study will include an overview of the use of external service providers that facilitate the process by various visa-issuing countries.

The research shall follow a mixed method, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches, reviewing publicly available information on visa practices as well as databases and combining sources at the national and international level. The research is foreseen to be mainly desk based but interviews with key informants will also be a key source of information in order to grasp the real existing challenges and facilitating factors that exist in visa processes. EU consulates in China, Chinese consulates in the EU as well

¹ The report will refer to travel trend before the outbreak of COVID-19.

² The final selection of countries will be listed once the information available for each country has been assessed.



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as consulates from the selected third countries and external services providers or visa application centres should be consulted in order to grasp a good understanding of the different visa facilitation practices. Tourism, business, cultural and sport associations, chambers of commerce, research institutions, NGOs should also be consulted for the report.

The study will be structured around descriptive and analytical research questions with the objective of providing a thorough country comparison that allows identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each visa regime.

4. Contents of the report

The overall expected contents of the report are:

- Introduction: background on visa facilitation between EU and China and recent short-stay travel patterns and trends from China to Europe and vice versa (tourism, business, visits to family and friends, ADS groups, etc.)³.
- Comparative study of (i) EU countries, (ii) China and (iii) selected third countries (tentatively Australia, Canada, Japan, the US, the UK and New Zealand) looking into:
 - Visa application process:
 - Overall visa process;
 - Types of visas issued;
 - Decision making, processing and waiting times;
 - Fees (including for external service providers);
 - Supporting documents required;
 - Complexity of the visa application form, including amount of information and data required (biometrics or bank statements for example);
 - Need for interview or presence in person;
 - Exemptions, if any.
 - Possible facilitating factors and challenges faced throughout the process, e.g:
 - Governance structure of entities in charge of visa decisions and process;
 - Use of external services providers or visa application centres;
 - Single point of presence in the capital vs regional presence;
 - Online application process and level of technology used;
 - Refusal rates and refusal reasons;
 - Visa validity;
 - Possibility of multiple-entry visas, their length of validity, requirements and conditions;

³ The report will focus on travel trend before the outbreak of COVID-19.



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- Facilitations / additional requirements for specific categories;
 - Requirements of special permits for certain territories within the country;
 - Other considerations, as identified.
- Impact of COVID-19 on visa processes of selected countries and preliminary policy considerations.
 - Conclusions this section will identify key findings from the comparative study and best practices in the different countries studied.

This content may be revised by the consultant and the final outline will be approved by IOM before the drafting of the report starts.

5. Deliverables and timeline: all deliverables should be submitted in English.

Deliverable	Timeline
Outline of the report (see point 6 for contents)	No later than 2 weeks after the signing of the contract. <i>The expected date is June 30th, 2020 but it will be confirmed at the time when the contract is signed.</i>
Draft research report (contents are set in the outline)	No later than 17 weeks after the signing of the contract. <i>The expected date is October 27th, 2020 but it will be confirmed at the time when the contract is signed.</i> IOM China will coordinate with the EU and Chinese stakeholders to provide unified feedback to the consultant. Feedback will be provided no later than 3 weeks after receiving the draft research report.
Final research report , incorporating IOM's feedback	No later than 3 weeks after receiving comments and feedback from IOM China. <i>The expected date is December 8th, 2020, but it will be confirmed at the time when the contract is signed.</i>

The consultant will maintain close communication with the Research Consultant in IOM China, and other project team members when relevant. In addition to the submission of deliverables specified in section 5, IOM may request additional check-ins with the consultant. These monitoring activities may include phone calls for progress updates, additional requests of draft submissions, or others as agreed between both parties. The timeline above may be adjusted to reflect external factors such as availability of key informants to participate in interviews.



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6. Outline of the report

The selected consultant will prepare an outline of the research report and submit to IOM in China for approval before starting the research. The outline should include:

- Objective of the research and expected contribution to the EU-China MMD and value added to the existing literature on the topic;
- Research approach and methodology – this section should be based on the ToR but the consultant may revise the proposed methodology explaining any foreseen changes;
- Draft outline of the report, including but not limited to:
 - a) Table of contents of the report, with a brief explanation of the scope of each section,
 - b) List of countries to be included in the study with a brief rationale for each country (the list can be further amended),
 - c) Tentative list of sources and prospective people/entities to be interviewed. The prospective list of interviewees will be shared with the EU for suggestions and integration.
 - d) Draft questionnaires developed by the consultant, to be then coordinated with IOM.
- Monitoring and progress reporting plan based on section 5 of the ToR. Any suggested changes should be justified.

These contents can include relevant additions if the consultant considers it necessary. This outline will be subject to a final revision- and subsequent approval by IOM - at the start of the research assignment.

7. Performance indicators for the evaluation of the final research report:

- Satisfactory completion of tasks indicated in the Terms of Reference;
- Level of adherence to the objectives and purpose of the research;
- Quality of the elaborated research and analysis;
- Timely delivery as indicated in section 5;
- Performance of any other tasks indicated above;
- Reporting on the estimated number of working days assigned to each deliverable;
- Periodic and regular updates on the progress of the deliverables provided to IOM.

How to apply:

Prospective consultants shall submit their CV and motivation letter to mrli@iom.int in IOM China by June 3rd, 2020, before midnight GMT+8.