



Vacancy Notice

Position Title:	Consultant (home based)
Duty Station:	IOM Beijing Office
Duration:	3 months
Estimated Start Date:	Immediate
Closing Date:	18 March 2021

1. 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 nongovernmental 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.

2. Nature of the consultancy

The objective of the research is to increase Chinese and European Union (EU) 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 the different visa regimes, the factors which may facilitate 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.

3. 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 MMSP II first specific objective, which is: "*to support the EU-China Mobility and Migration Dialogue (MMD), including the*





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 EU stakeholders with knowledge on 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 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.

4. 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 will look into several EU MS: Italy, Germany, Sweden, Portugal, Czech Republic and France, as well as China. Non- EU countries include Canada, Japan, and New Zealand.² 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 requirements and practices, as well as databases, and combining sources at the national and international level. Furthermore, the research should combine desk based research and interviews with key informants, which are expected to be a crucial source of information in order to grasp the real existing challenges and facilitating factors that exist in the different types of visa processes.

EU consulates in China, Chinese consulates in the EU as well as consulates from the selected third countries and external services providers or visa application centres should be consulted in order to grasp a good

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.





understanding of the different visa facilitation practices or hindering obstacles, both formal and informal. Tourism, business, cultural and sport associations, chambers of commerce, research institutions, NGOs should also be consulted for the report, as well as individual applicants.

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.

5. Tasks to be carried out by the consultant:

IOM has already undergone a first research phase and conducted a round of interviews. The selected consultant will be in charge of finalizing the research and the drafting of the report. In particular, the consultant is expected to carry out the following tasks:

1. Revision of and familiarization with current research documents: research Concept Note, report outline approved by IOM and the donor, ongoing draft report, inputs from interviews already conducted, and other documents that IOM's Research Consultant will share.
2. Revision and assessment of stakeholders' inputs already gathered.
3. Draft a brief summary based on acknowledgement of tasks already conducted (5-10 pages) that includes a list of remaining tasks, list of stakeholders to be interviewed and expected timeline for deliverables (if any changes with respect to the ToR), and list of questions to add.
The summary should include an assessment of the ongoing draft report against the approved contents of the report identifying which sections still require additional research and drafting, which can be discussed with the IOM Research Consultant. If any changes are suggested to the approved contents of the report, these will be discussed with IOM's Research Consultant and approved ahead of the drafting.
4. Develop interview questions (by stakeholder group) to be approved by IOM's Research Consultant. These may include interviews to new stakeholders and new questions to stakeholders who have already participated. IOM can facilitate contact with stakeholders who have already participated in the research.
5. Carry out stakeholder interviews as identified in the summary.
Interviews can be carried out on the phone or expect written responses from participants, as preferred by each stakeholder.
6. Carry out desk-review research as identified in the summary.
IOM will facilitate background and reference documents as well as data already gathered during the first phase of the research, but the consultant is expected to carry out additional qualitative and quantitative desk-based research.
7. Finalize the drafting of the research report.





The report is expected to meet IOM's standards of published reports. Sample reports can be provided by IOM.

8. Revision of the first draft once feedback to the first draft is received from IOM.
One draft submission is foreseen before the final report, but additional submissions can be agreed between the consultant and IOM.
9. Editing and formatting of the final report.

6. Contents of the report

The report is expected to follow the outlined contents below. The selected consultant may review this outline and include relevant additions or modifications if considered it necessary, which will be subject to a final approval by IOM at the start of the research assignment.

1. Executive summary: to be drafted only once the draft research report has been reviewed.
2. Introduction
 - 2.1 Objective of the research
 - 2.2 Background
 - 2.3 Latest trends on short stays of Chinese nationals in the EU and EU citizens in China
3. Methodology
 - 3.1 Limitations to the methodology
4. Impact of COVID-19
5. Overview of visa categories
6. Comparative study of visa processes for EU and Chinese applicants in China and the EU, respectively.
 - 6.1 Inputs
 - 6.1.1 Visa application forms
 - 6.1.2 Documentation required
 - 6.1.3 Biometric data
 - 6.1.4 Interview requirements
 - 6.1.5 Visa and service fees
 - 6.1.6 Total cost and time incurred in submitting an application
 - 6.1.7 Use of external service providers or visa application centres and presence in the capital vs. regional presence
 - 6.1.8 Online application process and level of technology
 - 6.1.9 Vulnerability to fraud
 - 6.2 Outputs
 - 6.2.1 The processing time of applications
 - 6.2.2 The likelihood of a successful application (e.g. refusal rates and refusal reasons)
 - 6.2.3 The period of entry and stay granted





- 6.2.4 Single entry or multiple entry visa (MEV)
- 6.2.5 The length of validity of the visa (especially for MEV)
- 6.2.6 Requirements of special permits for certain territories within the country

7. Best practices on visa facilitation

8. Conclusions

References

Annexes





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

Deliverable	Timeline	Payment
Draft research report (contents as set in the outlined contents in section 5 of these ToR)	No later than 6 weeks after the signing of the contract. <i>The expected date is May 18th, 2021.</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.	50% by June 2021.
Final research report , incorporating IOM's feedback to the first draft	Before July 6 th , 2020.	50% by July 2021.

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 6, 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 interview





8. Required skills and qualifications:

- Previous experience undertaking research projects and drafting research/ policy reports;
- Experience carrying out qualitative and quantitative desk-based research;
- Experience in the design of stakeholders' interviews and carrying out interviews to different groups of stakeholders;
- Knowledge and experience in the field of visas, preferable EU and China visas;
- Excellent ability to present comparative analyses as well as key findings and conclusions.
- Excellent drafting skills in English.

9. 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;
- Quality of overall report, adhering to IOM standards for published reports;
- Timely delivery as indicated in section 6;
- 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.

10. How to apply:

Prospective consultants shall submit their CV and motivation letter to mrli@iom.int in IOM China by March 18th, 2021, before midnight GMT+8.

