EU-CHINA DIALOGUE ON MIGRATION AND MOBILITY SUPPORT PROJECT

FOREWORD

Today, we are witnessing increasing global mobility and migration which bring undeniable benefits to states’ economies, together with the need to issue more travel documents, to undertake more border checks and to deal with issues related to national security and migrants’ safety. As such, Safe migration in a world on the move remains a key goal in the implementation of activities during this period.

At IOM, we believe that document verification plays a fundamental role to ensure migrants’ safety, at the same time providing the State with relevant measures to secure its borders. We facilitated two trainings on the examination of bank statements for visa personnel at European embassies to build relevant capacity (pag.2). On the issue of border management, IOM facilitated for a group of EU Embassies a visit to the Southern province of Guangdong to the MPS checkpoints, where documents of thousands of people crossing China Mainland’s borders are examined every day (pag.2).

Identification of irregular migrants is another crucial aspect of border management and a fundamental precondition for the orderly and safe return of irregular migrants. This was the focus of a practical training that brought together European and Chinese stakeholders to share tools and techniques currently used by authorities around the world to ascertain the identity of migrants (pag.2).

Through pre-departure orientation activities, IOM facilitated the exchange of information and best practice promoting safe migration and encouraging labour migrants to opt for legal migration channels. Given the important role played by recruitment agencies as migration intermediaries, IOM held a seminar for CHINCA and its affiliated local agencies to enhance their adherence to international standards in the management of labour migration (pag.3). During the seminar, IOM was very pleased to present a demo version of “赴欧贴士 (Destination Europe)” a WeChat APP developed by IOM to provide migration and integration information for specific destinations within Europe. The ultimate goal is to offer Chinese labour migrants a flavour of everyday life in three EU destination countries in a simple and user-friendly way (find out at pag.8 how to access the WeChat APP).

At the same time, ILO continues to support China’s endeavours in promoting safe labour migration and to curb forced labour. ILO facilitated a seminar for key Chinese governmental agencies and representatives of employers and workers to enhance understanding on international labour standards and practices against forced labour (pag.3). Two pieces of research complemented this period’s efforts in analysing the characteristics and trends of domestic, inbound and outbound labour migration (pag.6).

We take the opportunity to highlight the latest developments regarding the Global Compact for Safe and Orderly Migration (GCM), which IOM has been mandated by the UN to take a coordinating role. The intention of the Compact is to define shared principles in enhancing cooperation as an effective instrument of global governance on migration. Evidently, China is increasing its role in global governance on migration issues. In this issue, we report on China’s contribution to the GCM accomplishment. (pag.7).

Finally, some time for reflection: IOM joined the UN system in China in commemorating the UN Day, under the theme “SDGs in action”(pag. 7). For the most recent International Migrants Day, this issue documents how IOM reflected on the meaning of migration in today’s world.

Here in Beijing, we would like to welcome the new Director of ILO Country office for China and Mongolia. A warm welcome to Ms Claire Courteille-Mulier.

Pär Liljert
Chief of Mission, IOM Office in China
SAFE MIGRATION IN A WORLD ON THE MOVE

### BRIEFING ON DOCUMENT VERIFICATION FOR EUROPEAN EMBASSIES’ OFFICIALS IN GUANGZHOU AND SHANGHAI

It is a known fact that some irregular migrants from China to Europe increasingly use valid visas obtained through fraudulent supporting documents. As such, in collaboration with the Embassy of Italy, IOM organized two trainings for technical staff of EU Member States and non-EU Schengen Zone countries Visa Section on verification of bank statements in Guangzhou (3 May) and Shanghai (4 May).

Building on a similar successful activity held in Beijing on 21 March 2017, the training gathered 19 participants in Guangzhou and 35 in Shanghai from almost all EU and Schengen Consulates-General. They received in-depth training on document verification techniques, specifically on detecting fake or fraudulent Chinese bank statements.

The experts also provided information and advice on online tools and bank collaboration for investigations on documents’ genuineness. The activity also gave room for IOM to present its verification expertise provided to China and for the participants to exchange their best practices in detecting fraudulent documents.

**HOW TO IDENTIFY AN IRREGULAR MIGRANT: IOM FACILITATES PRACTICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN CHINA AND EUROPEAN ZONE**

Mechanisms for the orderly return of irregular migrants are a priority for the international community and more so, for the destination and origin countries. For the EU Member States and China, efforts at policy and technical levels in managing irregular migrants’ returns are fundamental. Returns agreements are intended to play an important role in tackling irregular migration by establishing a contractual framework based on reciprocal obligations. In the absence of such an agreement, the basic premise for effectively managing the return of irregular migrants is ascertaining their identity.

IOM organized a seminar on identification techniques related to the return of irregular migrants. The activity, held on 15–16 June 2017 in Guangzhou, gathered 37 Chinese officials from BEEA and 20 provincial public security departments. Experts from Belgium, Portugal, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain, China and IOM provided insights into identification of irregular migrants and shared their practicalities on identification techniques used by authorities in China and the European countries.

The range of identification techniques currently used by authorities around the world to determine the identity of migrants include: biometrics, ICT systems and background checks, specialized interviews, language tests and scientific tests. Experts highlighted that, as diverse information is collected along a migrant’s path, the convergence of available information across authorities and agencies is essential.

The activity also presented an opportunity for the experts and participants to share evidence-based research on gaps/challenges in the application of methodology vis-à-vis the ever-changing scope of irregular migration. Driven by developments in connection with immigration challenges, the identification techniques must be adapted if they are to be useful and effectively support governments in facilitating orderly returns of irregular migrants to their home countries.

Finally, the full spectrum of authorities and stakeholders must be more strategic by enhancing their intra-institutional collaboration (police, immigration and customs), as well as the regional and international cooperation.

### EU DIPLOMATS LEARN FROM SHENZHEN AND ZHUHAI CHECKPOINTS

As China forges ahead with the One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative to further economic and infrastructure cooperation projects, mobility of Chinese nationals to other destinations and the EU will likely continue to increase.

In the Guangdong region, the rapid development of transport infrastructure spans the Pearl River Delta and connects the cities of Zhuhai and Shenzhen to their neighbours Macao SAR and Hongkong SAR. As such, the movement of people and goods between China mainland and the two special administrative regions is likely to increase significantly.

In this context, IOM together with a group of EU MS diplomats and consular officials visited the checkpoints managed by the Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS BEEA) to handle the significant flows of people moving in the Pearl River Delta Region. This field visit provided participants with information on the functions and procedures, including the use of e-channels biometrics collection and other instruments used to manage internal border controls and the flow of passengers between mainland China and Macao SAR/Hong Kong SAR.

This type of information facilitates the consular services of European embassies in terms of providing appropriate information to their nationals. Local officials of Shenzhen Bay port welcomed the visit of the foreign delegates in light of enhanced cooperation.

The activity was also an opportunity for European and Chinese officials to highlight good practices, identify challenges in operations, as well as to share on visas and customs as areas of common interest.
On 22-23 November, IOM facilitated a Workshop on Pre-Departure Orientation for recruitment agencies to enhance their support for Chinese workers going to Europe. A total of 45 Chinese participants from China International Contractors Association (CHINCA) and its member recruitment agencies, representatives from the Ministry of Commerce, and from Provincial and Municipal commerce offices received insights on safe labour migration by ensuring adherence to regulations and standards in the management of recruitment agencies. They also shared best practice on international legal frameworks related to labour migration, with a special emphasis on the pre-departure orientation.

Presenters included governmental representatives from Italy, Sweden and Finland, as well as experts with extensive experience in international labour management from IOM Thailand and ILO.

The workshop was linked to another MMSP activity (Good Practice Pre-Departure Orientation Guidelines and accompanying mobile phone application) designed to support CHINCA and its recruitment agencies to target Chinese labour migrants moving to European destinations. With this ambition, IOM China developed a WeChat APP providing useful information about three pilot EU destination countries (Austria, Germany and Italy). The workshop represented a good opportunity to introduce a demo version of the APP and receive valuable feedback from stakeholders who understand the specific needs of the APP’s end users.

As China is currently considering ratifying the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No.29), on 23-24 November 2017, the International Labour Organization (ILO) facilitated a seminar for key Chinese Governmental agencies and representatives of Employers and Workers to support China’s endeavours in combating forced labour and enhancing understanding on international labour standards and practices.

The initiative saw the participation of 40 representatives from the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS), State Council Legal Affairs Bureau, National People’s Congress Legal Affairs Committee, All-China Unions (ACFTU), China Federation of Trades Unions (CEC), and State Safety (SAWS). Experts introduced international labour frameworks related to forced labour; introduced the ILO Fair Recruitment Guidelines and its role in forced labour management; reviewed China’s law and practice on eliminating forced labour; presented international good practices on preventing forced labour and “Modern Slavery” in global supply chains. Discussions were enriched by inputs from the UK representative who gave an overview on the implementation of forced labour standards in the United Kingdom, as well as on enforcement and prosecution measures related to modern slavery.

In recent years, the Chinese government has taken significant steps to revise its legislation and tackle forced labour, including the abolition of the Re-education through Labour System in December 2013. Cooperation between ILO and China working towards the ratification of the forced labour Conventions (C. 29, C. 105 and P. 29) has been ongoing since 2003. As LV Yulin, Deputy Director-General of the International Cooperation Department of the MOHRSS, pointed out, “[…] Working together with ILO and other countries, we look forward to continued efforts for China in the ratification process to work against forced labour and modern slavery”.

For the text of the convention, refer to this link: https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/ILO_Convention_29.pdf
BRIEFING BY EUROPEAN EXPERT ON CHINA’S NEW WORK PERMIT AND FOREIGN WORKERS’ RIGHTS IN CHINA

On 19 December 2017, IOM organized a briefing attended by EU MS officials to explain recent reforms on Chinese immigration law affecting foreign workers. Professor Björn Ahl, an expert on Chinese public and constitutional law and the Chair of the Chinese Legal Culture of the University of Cologne, conducted the seminar.

In April 2017, China launched a new nation-wide work permit system for foreigners. The new system includes the rationalisation of administrative procedures and a new classification of foreign workers into three categories, based on a 9 point-system. Among the new facilities, a “green channel” has been opened for top talents with the possibility for them to directly apply online for completion and submission of application materials. See more information about the process in our 5th issue newsletter.

According to Prof Ahl, this new system aims to attract high-skilled migrants (category A), regulate the arrival of skilled migrants (category B) by using market labour test and control the quotas for low-skilled migrants (category C). The distinction between the categories is related to skill levels and reflects the need for the Chinese labour market to attract highly talented skills to foster current productivity. Compared with the requirements of the previous selection system, the new selection system does not introduce higher thresholds for admitting foreign nationals for employment purposes.

In terms of residence schemes, Prof Ahl noted that a residence permit is issued for the duration of the work permit which, in turn, is strictly linked to the employment contract. In case of change of employer, occupation or new geographic location, as a general rule foreigners must apply for the new work permit in their home countries. Regardless of the length of the contract, strict regulations apply to the validity of your visa (e.g. one year validity). Foreign workers residing in China are subject to labour law protection instruments (leave entitlement, minimum wage and maximum work hours) as stated within the Regulations of the Administration of Foreigners Working in China, the Labour Law and the Labour Contract Law. While foreigners are expected to pay contributions under five categories of the social security scheme (similar to Chinese nationals), foreigners cannot claim unemployment benefits, as the termination of the employment contract automatically terminates legal residency rights. Prof Ahl remarked that cases from relevant judicial system tend to draw a balance between rights of migrant workers within the limitations of the labour laws.

For details on the evaluation criteria of foreign nationals applying for work permit, click here. (English)

INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS’ DAY— A MEANINGFUL CELEBRATION IN A WORLD ON THE MOVE

On the 18 December, IOM commemorated International Migrants Day. It is estimated that there are 250 million international migrants, and 763 million internal migrants globally. Governments and international partners have come a long way in exploring and implementing measures that foster regular and safe migration.

In a world dominated by misconceptions about migrants and migration, as the UN migration agency, IOM works together with various partner governments, civil society, and the private sector in striving for a better and more balanced understanding and management of migration. Migration is a good thing, which can bring benefits to sending and destination countries, as well as to the migrants themselves. Today, millions are traveling in ever greater numbers. They move safely, in an orderly and regular way, their passports (and visas) in hand. Working to find common rules in order to allow many more to travel, migrate and return home freely and safely is a global responsibility. The international community must offer hope to those facing economic despair and provide legal pathways for more migrants or circular migration options for those who wish to work and return home. Otherwise, if we do not come up with durable solutions, irregular service providers, like smugglers and traffickers, will facilitate irregular migration at a great cost to human life and to the fabric of our societies.

Moving in this direction would change the negative narrative of migration.
CHINA’S MPS ANNOUNCES NEW VISA AND RESIDENCE PERMIT RULES FOR OVERSEAS CHINESE OF NON-CHINESE NATIONALITY.

In recent years, Chinese authorities have adopted several policies and measures to attract overseas Chinese talents to return to China.

Most recently, on 22 January 2018 the Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration (BEEA) of the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) announced new rules to facilitate the entry and exit of overseas Chinese holding non-Chinese passports. These rules are part of a broader set of measures introduced to further improve several aspects of Chinese people’s mobility, including movements between mainland China and its special administrative regions.

According to the new rules, a multiple-entry visa valid for five years can be granted to overseas Chinese willing to return to China for the purposes of visiting their relatives, carrying out business, science, education, and cultural exchange activities, as well as for medical reasons. The old regulation only allowed a one-year validity visa. Similarly, residence permits for overseas Chinese working, studying or doing business in China will be extended to five years, instead of previous three-year length.

Click here for more information in English, and here for Chinese.

NEW TRANSIT RULES FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLERS: 144-HOUR VISA FREE FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES

The MPS announced a new 144-hour visa-free transit policy for foreign nationals from selected countries to facilitate international travellers. The new policy is carried out in the municipalities of Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin, as well as in selected ports of entry in the provinces of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Hebei. It allows passengers from 53 countries/regions to transit 144 hours (6 days) without holding a visa. Previous regulations allowed transit for 72 hours.

Who can enjoy the 144-hour visa exemption?

24 Schengen Countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland

15 Other European Countries: Russia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Albania, Belarus, Monaco

6 American Countries: The United States, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile

2 Oceanian Countries: Australia, New Zealand

6 Asian Countries: Korea, Japan, Singapore, Brunei, United Arab Emirates, Qatar

NEW RULES FOR “R VISA” MAKE LIFE EASIER FOR FOREIGN TALENTS IN CHINA

On 1 January, Beijing and nine other provinces and cities implemented a pilot scheme for new foreign talent visa rules to further simplify the entry and stay of foreign experts frequently travelling to China.

According to the new regulations released jointly by The State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and MPS, foreign experts whose skills are in urgent demand are permitted to stay in China under an R visa for up to 180 days at a time, with multiple entries on a visa valid from five to 10 years. The policy also applies to the foreign expert’s spouse and children, under the same conditions. Under the new rule, foreign talents can apply for a Confirmation Letter of Foreign High-end Talent online, without any paperwork and free of charge. A decision is taken within 5 working days instead of the previous 10-day evaluation time. Once the foreign expert is certified, the R visa can be issued in up to two working days.

The “R Visa Talent Scheme” was introduced in 2013 for foreign high-level personnel and much-needed highly talented people who frequently travel to and reside in China for a brief period of time. Top scientists, international entrepreneurs and other specifically high-skilled considered beneficial to the economic and social development of the country are all qualified to apply for the visa. The R visa complements the Work Z Visa that allows foreigners to apply for a work and residence permit in China.

Latest development: China has announced that a State Immigration Administration under the Ministry of Public Security will be set up as part of its institutional reform plan of the State Council. This was approved by the national legislative session in March 2018.

From which ports can I apply for a 144-hour transit visa?

Shanghai: Pudong International Airport, Hongqiao International Airport, all the train stations, Shanghai Port International Cruise Terminal and Wusongkou Terminal.

Beijing: Beijing Capital International Airport and Beijing Railway West Station

Tianjin: Tianjin Binhai International Airport and Tianjin International Cruise Home Port

Jiangsu Province: Nanjing Lukou International Airport

Zhejiang Province: Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport and Qinhuangdao Seaport

Hebei: Shijiazhuang Zhengding International Airport and Qinhuangdao Seaport

Which documents do I need?

A valid passport or other international travel documents

Flight ticket for a third country within 144 hours (including Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR or Taiwan)

Duly compiled Arrival/Departure Card.

To read more about the policy, click here (Chinese)
IOM RELEASES ITS WORLD MIGRATION REPORT 2018

The World Migration Report 2018 was released in early December 2017. This is the first issue since IOM assumed its role as the United Nations Migration Agency. As the ninth report since 2000, it constitutes IOM’s flagship publication and an important source of migration information to contribute to increased understanding of trends, developments and challenges throughout the world. This edition presents key data and evidence on migration, both at regional and national level, as well as thematic chapters on salient migration issues. The report reflects on complex emerging issues such as migration and global governance, migration and transnational connectivity, the relation between migration, violent extremism and social exclusion, how media reports on migration, as well as migration journeys as seen from migrants’ perspectives.

With migration on the rise in recent years, people and states are increasingly interconnected. A key global priority is acknowledging the need for enhanced efforts towards safe and better managed migration. The 2018 report comes against a backdrop of growing interconnections, but also suspicion and misconceptions that migration has gained under the public opinion’s spotlight. This publication aims at demystifying myths and opinions on migration through data and evidence-based facts. At the same time, it is intended to be a solid source of analysis and policy recommendations for decision makers on some of the most important and pressing global issues that they are or soon will be grappling with.

As IOM DG William Lacy Swing underlines, “We have an obligation to demystify the ‘world’ of migration for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, students and the general public. It is our intention to promote a balanced understanding of migration’s complexities, present relevant data and information in an accessible way, explain salient, complex and emerging issues and share over 65 years of our diverse experience across the world.”

The report is currently available in English, Spanish and French. The IOM Office will release the Chinese version in the 2nd quarter of 2018.

To download the complete report, follow this link: http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf
On 24 October 2017, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in China and the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation co-hosted the commemoration of the United Nations Day, which marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter, celebrated as the founding act of the United Nations.

This year’s theme, ‘SDG Action Day’, was raising awareness on the practical actions that the various UN agencies together with our partner in China implement towards achieving the SDGs. This event shed light on the global commitment signed up by countries around the world to achieve 17 SDGs and their 169 targets in the upcoming fifteen years. To know more about the SDGs, click here. (out link to the Chinese page on SDGs)

During the exhibition, the 24 UN funds, programs and specialized agencies present in China actively engaged with invitees and showcased their work in supporting the Chinese government to implement the SDGs targets and indicators.

GLOBAL COMPACT FOR MIGRATION: A BRIEF STORY ABOUT ITS GENESIS, MISSION AND STEPS FORWARD

In September 2016, at the first ever Summit at the Heads of State and Government level on large movements of refugees and migrants, the UN General Assembly aimed at coming up with a blueprint for a better international response, through strengthening governance of international migration and to agree on a more responsible, predictable system for responding to large movements of refugees and migrants. The “New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants” expresses the political will to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale. The NY Declaration resulted in a new process to negotiate two compacts by the end of 2018: the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (also referred to as the Global Compact for Migration—GCM).

What is the GCM? The global compact would set out a range of shared principles, commitments and understandings among Member States regarding international migration in all its dimensions. Its final goal is to enhance cooperation as an effective instrument of global governance on migration, by following a humanitarian, developmental and rights-based approach.

Why do we need a GCM? The international community needs common and shared principles to manage migration by putting migrants’ rights and dignity at the very core of our action. Migration is as old as human society: people are motivated to move for various reasons. In today’s world, we are witnessing unprecedented flows of people moving from one place to another in search of new economic opportunities; or to escape armed conflict, poverty, food insecurity, persecution, terrorism, human rights violations; or moving in response to the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters. It is a global responsibility to guarantee that this process will be safe and respectful of people’s rights. Evidence shows that safe, orderly and regular migration leads to substantial benefits and opportunities for both departure and destination countries, which are often underestimated. At the same time, irregular migration presents complex challenges that need to be managed tactfully. There have been significant efforts by governments around the world to better manage migration. However, there are gaps in cooperation at regional and international levels in mitigating challenges and finding common approaches.

With regard to the calendar towards a GCM, there are three phases:
DESTINATION EUROPE
PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION FOR MIGRANT WORKERS BECOMES AN APP!

To access the APP
follow the IOM Official WeChat account!