

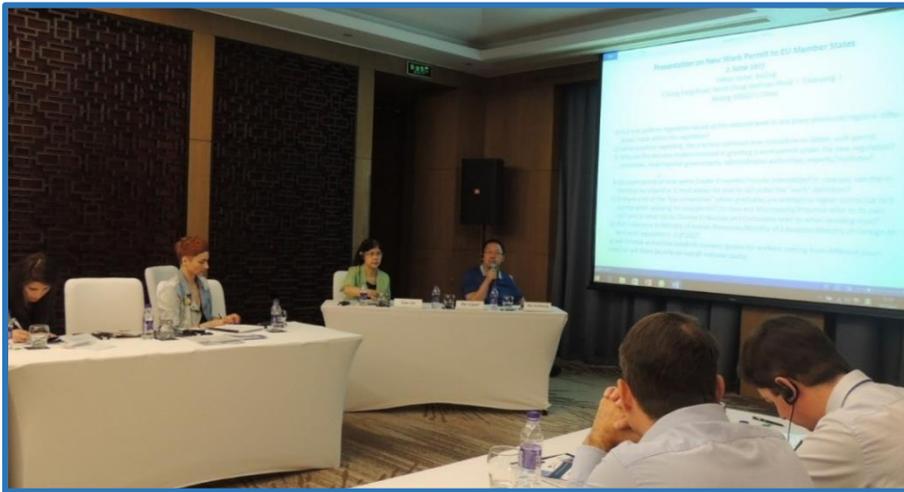


EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project
支持中欧人员往来和移民领域对话项目

Presentation on New Work Permit for Foreigners
To European Embassies

Beijing, 2 June, 2017

Summary Report



Under the framework of the *EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*, on 2 June 2017, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) facilitated, a presentation for European Embassies officials on the new work permit for foreigners working in China. The activity gathered 20 participants from consular and economic and commercial sections of 14 European Union (EU) Member States (MS), the EU Delegation to China and EURAXESS China, who were briefed on the recently reformed work permit, its operationalization and roll out, as well as on SAFEA's core functions in implementing this new system.

The presentation was conducted by Ms Gao Lin, Deputy Director General from the Division of Foreigners' Management from the Department of Policies and Regulations from the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA), and supported by Mr Qiu Xusheng, Director of the Division of Foreigner's Management from the Department of Policies and Regulations of SAFEA. SAFEA is the governmental body responsible for certifying foreign experts to work in China and organizing overseas training for Chinese technical and managerial professionals.

During the opening remarks, Mr Juan Jose Almagro Herrador, from the EU Delegation to China, highlighted that greater mobility comes with opportunities as well as challenges, and that this new system will benefit the EU-China cooperation on migration



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opportunities. Indeed, the new regulation is part of the continuous efforts made by the Chinese government to enhance its policies and schemes to attract foreigners and overseas Chinese to come to China to seek work opportunities and settlement.

In September 2010, the *Regulations of the People's Republic of China on the Administration of the Entry and Exit of Foreigners* was implemented (and revised in 2013) as the key immigration document for China. Under this system, foreigners had to apply for different types of visas and work permits depending on their qualifications: either the “Entry Work Permit for Foreigners” (an employment license for foreign employees targeting semi-skilled workers and issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security), or the “Work Permit for Foreign Experts in China” (a foreign expert’s work permit for top talent needed by the State issued by SAFEA). In practice, this meant two different sets of procedures under two authorities resulting in two distinct permits, which has often caused duplication of efforts coupled with bureaucratic bottlenecks.

Acknowledging those difficulties, the State Council released the *Announcement for the Trial of Work Permit System for Foreign Workers in China*, in September 2016, which was designed to ease administrative procedures, shorten bureaucratic times, avoid administrative loopholes and improve efficiency. Accordingly, SAFEA has been tasked to organize the implementation of a new “Foreigner’s Work Permit” (integrating the two previous permits into a single one). It first launched a pilot program of the new work permit in 10 provinces and municipalities (including Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shanghai, Anhui, Shandong, Guangdong, Sichuan and Ningxia) before announcing in March 2017, that the pilot would be implemented at the central level. On 1 April 2017, the new Foreigners Work Permit System was carried out nationwide and will be in a transition phase until its full implementation on 1 July 2017.

Under the new regulation, the previous permits are combined into a single “Work Permit for Foreigners in China”, managed exclusively by SAFEA. Foreign workers will be classified into three categories, according to their qualifications:

- *Level A*: for high-level talents (including young talents, scientists, international entrepreneurs, leading figures in science and technology and specialized professionals needed by the State)
- *Level B*: for professional personnel to meet the needs of China’s economic development (professional technicians, foreign language teachers, master graduates from top universities).
- *Level C*: for temporary/seasonal workers based on local market needs (housekeepers, seasonal workers in border areas, fishing workers).



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The new system has unified and simplified the procedures, clarified the steps, and halved the documents required from foreign applicants in all kind of applications. The first step when applying for the Foreigner’s Work Permit is to ask the employers to register the worker online (into the “Foreigners Working Administrative Information System”). The foreign experts’ administrative departments will then approve and issue the Foreigner Working Permit Notice online. The following step is to ask for a Z visa at the Chinese Embassy with the Foreign Work Permit, an invitation letter from the company and a valid passport. Once in China, foreign workers will have to fill the remaining information in the system to apply and obtain the Alien Employment Permit and the Work Residence Permit.

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, without submitting hard-copies materials. Each applicant will also be assigned a unique ID number that does not change, regardless of permit renewal or change of employer.



Feedback from participants was positive as the presentation enabled them to answer their questions on the new system and will allow them to provide up-to-date information to their citizens willing work in China. IOM is available if further questions should arise when the system will be fully implemented, and will coordinate with SAFEA to answer them.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Agenda

Annex 2: List of participants