

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

Forum on Policy and Practical Measures to Promote Researchers' Mobility between  
EU and China

8-9 September 2016, Beijing

Summary Report



On 8-9 September 2016, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in cooperation with the Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration (BEEA) of Chinese Ministry of Public Security (MPS) successfully conducted a two-day *Forum on Policy and Practical Measures to Promote Researchers' Mobility between EU and China* in Beijing. The objective of the workshop was to establish a platform for constructive dialogue between the European and Chinese counterparts to address researchers' mobility between EU and China in support of an enhanced research and innovation environment. This important activity falls under the framework of the EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project.

The forum gathered around 24 Chinese participants from key Chinese authorities dealing with mobility of researchers, which included BEEA of MPS, BEEA of Beijing Public Security Bureau (PSB), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), the State Administration for Foreign Expert Affairs (SAFEA), the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security (MOHRSS), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) as well as the Centre for China and Globalization (CCG) and Science and Technology of Aviation Industry of China Composite Corporation Ltd.. Other representatives included officials from the European Union (EU) Delegation to China and Mongolia, IOM Liaison Office in China, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for China and Mongolia, as well as officials from EU embassies in China. A number of foreign researchers and doctoral students based in China were also present. The detailed list of participants is attached.

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At the opening ceremony, Mr. Christopher Wood, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the EU Delegation to China and Mongolia stated that mobility was a high on the agenda of the various EU-China high-level dialogue forums: Migration and Mobility; Science, Technology and Innovation as well as People-to-People. He mentioned the fundamental role of researchers' mobility is to promote effective scientific cooperation, ensuring mutual understanding of respective cultures and systems and building lifelong ties between European and Chinese scientists. Mr PANG Shuqiang, Deputy Director-General of BEEA of MPS emphasised that his bureau had initiated a number of measures to attract foreign high-skilled talents to China. The objective of these measures was to improve the application process for foreigners for their residence permit and for Chinese diaspora to undertake research, scientific and innovative activities in China. Mr Etienne Micallef, Project Manager, IOM added that the challenges with regard to EU-China researchers' mobility need an all-inclusive dialogue platform to analyse the various aspects and propose evidence-based policy recommendations in support of stronger EU-China relations in research and innovation. Ms PEI Hongye, National Project Coordinator, ILO alluded that China has become a major player in global research & development and put a strategic emphasis on creativity and innovation in its new stage of development. She added that China's continued cooperation with both the EU and its member states on science, technology and innovation, and international researcher mobility remains an important element.

During the forum, the participants had a chance to visit the Zhongguancun Foreigners' Services Centre and the National Innovation Demonstration Zone Exhibition Center where a presentation was made of the new 20 measures of exit and entry administration aimed at attracting more high-skilled overseas Chinese and foreigners to the Beijing Zhongguancun Science Park to drive scientific innovation. The center offers visa, residence permit and permanent residence services to foreigners with businesses or employed in the Zhongguancun. In order to better publicize the new 20 visa measures, the center produced a number of bilingual brochures on the various visas' applications and procedures to facilitate the application process for foreigners. It is intended that the experience gained in this pilot project is used to promote similar services throughout Beijing, or even nationwide. Currently, while another service centre in Dongzhimen is also in charge of providing services to foreigners in Beijing, the centre of Zhongguancun only targets the foreign high-skilled talents.

In addition, two Chinese officials from BEEA Shanghai PSB and BEEA Guangdong Provincial PSB gave brief outlines on the newly launched measures of exit and entry administration in Shanghai Science and Innovation Centre and Guangdong Free Trade Zone. The Shanghai visa policies intended to facilitate the immigration process of "highly-skilled foreigners" coming to work in Shanghai, to attract and retain foreign talent and to establish a comprehensive Shanghai science and innovation center. The main new policies include simplified visa application procedures; establishment of a market-led channel for permanent residence; improvement of the mechanism for foreigners transitioning from work/residence permit to permanent residence; promoting foreign graduates to participate in entrepreneurial and innovative activities in Shanghai;

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streamlining the application process for innovative and entrepreneurial foreign talents and expanding the eligibility criteria for permanent residence of foreigners.

Guangdong's 16 new policies were designed to attract qualified foreign nationals to the Free Trade Zone (as employees or entrepreneurs), relax the eligibility criteria to obtain permanent residence status ("China green card"), and introduce simplified visa application procedures. In comparison with Beijing and Shanghai new policies and measures, Guangdong adopted few different incentive policies such as the possibility of foreign talent or HK/Macau/Taiwan talents permit holders to recruit foreign domestic workers; Chinese individuals living overseas but who were born in Guangdong or who had a household registration in Guangdong at any time can apply for a five-year multiple entry visa or a five-year residence permit; foreign individuals investing directly in the Guangdong Free Trade Zone are eligible for China green card, provided some particular financial criteria are fulfilled.

The BEEA of MPS explained that the cities selected to implement the new measures was on the basis of the large number of foreigners to the respective cities and targeted to attract more foreign talents to develop local economic development. The bureau intends to evaluate the implementation of these new measures in the pilot centres so as to make relevant improvements before rolling out to more cities of China.

Key points of the forum:

- The officials from the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Delegation of the European Union to China and Mongolia introduced China's policy and strategy of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) and the system of new Horizon 2020 between China and Europe respectively. Both sides emphasised ongoing good and close EU-China STI cooperation and stated that the new co-funding STI mechanism made cooperation more practical, open and provided relevant depth. Regarding the EU-China mobility of researchers, Dr Laurent Bochereau, Minister Counsellor, Head of Science, Technology and Environment Section, Delegation of the European Union to China and Mongolia elaborated the EU schemes aimed at promoting researchers' exchanges. **For the EU, there is an increasing demand for high-skilled talents from third countries given the shortage of human resources in the areas of ICT, engineering and health care, among others.** In 2014, 1002 Chinese were granted the EU blue card and currently, **the EU is reviewing its legislation to attract more high-skilled talents from third countries.**
- An overview by Mr Marcin Grabiec, First Secretary, Delegation of the European Union to China and Mongolia showed the EU's practical measures to encourage researcher mobility with existing **European initiatives for Third Country researchers' long-term mobility, which include permanent residence, EU Scientific visa package and EU Blue Card.**

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- Mr Max Dörner, Counsellor, Embassy of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg provided a brief introduction on the short-term mobility means available through the **Schengen visa policy for third-country researchers and its recommendations on how to facilitate visa policies to promote the mobility of researchers to Europe.**
- Ms XU Xiaohong, Deputy Director of Foreigners Services Management Guidance Division, BEEA of MPS introduced China's visa and residence policy measures in support of foreign high-skilled talent attraction schemes. **The Chinese government has successively launched a series of visa policies to facilitate the immigration process of "highly-skilled foreigners"** in Shanghai Science and Innovation Centre in July 2015; Fujian Free Trade Zone in January 2016, Zhongguancun Science Park in March 2016 and Guangdong Free Trade Zone in August 2016. The main contents of these new measures included: expanding the scope of foreign high-skilled talents to apply for R Visas and S Visas; providing the support for foreign students to start up their business and undertake innovation activities in China; encouraging foreign college graduates with special skills to conduct internships in China; providing more stable residence expectations and supporting services for foreigners in China; continuing to promote the permanent residence system reform in China. **The application of these measures has given rise to the number of overseas applicants applying for the permanent residence with MPS approving 10,084 permanent permits for foreigners in China by the end of August 2016.**
- Ms WANG Xiangrong, Deputy Director-General, Department of Policies and Regulations, State Administration for Foreign Expert Affairs (SAFEA) elaborated that **China has revised work permit process following a recent reform aimed at improving efficiency to attract more skilled foreign talents to China.** The specific measures include an online application process and a unified approval process which will improve communication between government services concerned and ultimately better serve overseas talents coming to work in China. The pilot phase, Oct 2016 – March 2017, will be carried out in Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin municipalities as well as in Hebei, Anhui, Shandong, Guangdong and Sichuan provinces and the Ningxia Hui autonomous region. The reform will be implemented nationwide in April 2017.
- Ms Julia Zheng, Deputy Secretary General, Director of Research, Centre for China & Globalization gave an overview of the various talent attraction schemes & policies in China, which covered the global background for seeking foreign skilled talent, the review of China's talent attraction policy and visa regulation changes for foreign talents. **China's talent attraction programs for high-level talents at national, provincial and municipal level are in line with the national strategy on speeding up talent development mechanism, reformation and innovation in policy.** She emphasised the three legal documents of Chinese government aimed at attracting overseas talents, which

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focused on further developing the talent attraction mechanism by improving the welfare and employment services, as well as expanding the talent pool by lowering the admission requirements.

- Ms Andrea STŘELCOVÁ, Country Representative, EURAXESS provided an overview about European researchers' mobility in China. EURAXESS is an initiative launched and funded by the EU to support mobility of researchers within Europe and between Europe and the rest of the world. It has employment and fellowships portals offering career opportunities to all researchers, including research organisations, of all nationalities in Europe and worldwide. **EURAXESS China plays an important role and platform to develop the network of contacts in the Sino-European research community, keep track of the latest developments in Sino-European research, to explore new funding and career opportunities.**
- Ms Lin Goethals, PhD candidate introduced the typology and characteristics of researchers and their mobility between the EU and China, the challenges for EU researchers in China and her practical experience in China from European perspective. The challenges include limited space for manoeuvring and undertaking independent work; limited integration in the faculty/teaching assignments; separation of international and local students/PhDs, difficulties in visa application, etc. **Recommendations to facilitate the researchers' mobility include further integration of China into international research environment;** improvement of institutional preparedness and quality assurance; consider a "research visa"; increased integration of researchers and application of their capabilities, facilitate access to funding as well as promote the added value of Research/PhD in China.
- Professor YI Xiaosu, Director of the ACCA's Science and Technology Committee shared his practical experience of working with European partners in the field of scientific research. He mentioned that improved **researcher mobility should include cooperative research projects through bilateral government agreements and joint initiatives such as EU-China initiatives.**

The forum created an exchange platform for dialogue between the Chinese officials from key ministries and European participants to discuss the current situation, trends and challenges of researchers' mobility between China and European Union. It provided a good opportunity for the parties involved, surrounded by research institutions, to elaborate on the new developments of policies and measures on facilitating the researchers' mobility as well as highlighting the existing challenges. Both sides improved their understanding of strategies and initiatives on researchers' mobility.

The site visit in Zhongguancun gave the participants practical visual impression on how the service centre operated and its service provided to the foreigners in Zhongguancun. The discussions with provincial officials of exit and entry administration was a valuable

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link for European counterparts and gave further insight to pilot projects for attracting foreign talent to China. The participants also recommended practical measures to further facilitate EU-China researchers' mobility which will also help the improvement of visa policies and measures for researchers' mobility between European and China.

#### The dissemination of Information

Visibility materials of the 'EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project', including; project brochure, newsletter, promotional notepads, bags, IOM's flagship report- the World Migration Report – 2015,etc. were widely distributed to all participants.

Following this Forum EU Delegation in China issued an article on its website: [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2016/2016090902\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/china/press_corner/all_news/news/2016/2016090902_en.htm)

#### Evaluation questionnaires

Twenty participants filled in the evaluation questionnaire. The overall feedback was very positive. All agreed that the forum was very helpful and relevant to their work. Eighteen participants stated that the objectives of the training were achieved.

Participants highlighted that this workshop was a very good platform to improve mutual understanding and cooperation on researchers' mobility between Europe and China. It provided an opportunity to share essential information among relevant players and facilitated exchanges between policy makers and researchers. The forum enhanced the networking between the EU and Chinese side. It is envisaged that similar activities can be held regularly as an avenue to exchange knowledge and particularly that more information on the European foreign talents attraction policy (once available) is shared.

#### Annexes:

Annex 1: Agenda

Annex 2: List of participants

Annex 3: Evaluation Summary