



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

Training on document verification (bank statements) for Visa Section Officials in Guangzhou & Shanghai

Guangzhou, 3 May, 2017

Shanghai, 4 May, 2017

Summary Report

On 3 and 4 May 2017, the International Organization Migration (IOM) with the collaboration of the Embassy of Italy in Beijing, organized two training seminars for staff members of European Union (EU) Member States (MS) and non-EU Schengen Zone countries Consulates-General visa sections in Guangzhou and Shanghai on document verification techniques, specifically on detection techniques of fake, or fraudulent, Chinese bank statements. This training, built on the rationale and proposed activities of the Anti-Fraud component within the Partnership Instrument (PI) funded programme “*EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*” and followed the very positive feedback following a similar training held in Beijing.

The training gathered 19 participants in Guangzhou and 35 participants in Shanghai from almost all EU and Schengen Consulates-General visa sections. This strong representation once again highlighted the great interest in understanding detecting fake or fraudulent visa supporting documents provided by Chinese visa applicants.

First Secretary and Consul for Italy, Mr. Massimo Gaudiano in his opening remarks, emphasized the need for European consular missions to be able to recognize fake or fraudulent supporting documents when it comes to visa application. Mr. Gaudiano also highlighted the importance of information-sharing among the visa staff on detecting fraudulent documents.

A general presentation of the “*EU-China Dialogue on Migration and Mobility Support Project*” and of IOM’s work in China was also made by Mr. Etienne Micallef. In particular, he introduced IOM’s verification services in China and emphasized a crucial role of the visa processing stage played in detecting possible risk travelers, including irregular migrants and potential victims of trafficking.

The training was provided by two staff members of the visa section of the Italian Embassy, Ms Valentina Liberatore and Ms Sara Iaia, who have developed specific expertise and techniques to detect fraudulent bank statements.



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- Firstly, they presented the major banks in China (Bank of China, ICBC, Construction Bank and Bank of Agriculture), their different characteristics and gave an overview of bank statements and their features.
- Secondly, they trained participants to recognize fraudulent bank statements by providing many examples of fake and genuine documents and pointing out the features that must be scrutinized thoroughly.
- Thirdly, they explained how to check bank statement information online as well as, when necessary, by calling the bank, and gave tips to the participants on how to make the bank collaborate to track down fraudulent statements.

This training created a unique platform for visa section officials to share and exchange expertise and practical experience on detecting fraudulent documents, such as Chinese bank statements. It also strengthened the network of visa section staff regarding working on fraudulent documents of Chinese applicants. Through this activity, the involved participants improved their techniques and skills on detecting fraudulent bank statements. In addition, it identified possible areas of having a depth discussion and commination for future similar activities.

Recommendations for way forward:

The participants came with the following suggestions and recommendations:

1. Contact Chinese authorities such as the Public Security Bureau to jointly organize a training on the detection of fake or fraudulent Hukou certificates.
2. IOM to facilitate a meeting with main Chinese banks to discuss possible avenues for collaboration.
3. Provide recommendations on how to address the current Chinese realities in the world of personal finance and credit, such as the widespread use of third-party payment services such as WeChat Pay or Alipay and other financial products such as Yuebao that are becoming more popular than bank accounts.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Agenda

Annex 2: List of participants