



GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

2024-065 | March 20, 2024

People's Republic of China – More Countries to Benefit from Expanded Visa Exemption Policy

On 7 March 2024, the government of the People's Republic of China ("China" or "PRC") further expanded temporary visa exemptions to another six countries.¹

With effect from 14 March 2024, **Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, and Luxembourg** have been added to the PRC's unilateral visa exemption policy **valid until 30 November 2024**. Travellers who hold passports of any of these six countries coming to China for the purpose of business, tourism, visiting relatives and friends, and/or transit, are exempt from needing a Chinese visa to enter China for a period not exceeding 15 days from the date of their entry. The 15-days should be counted from the day following the arrival date.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Visa-exemption policies can bring considerable convenience to international travellers for short-term visits to China; however, the duration of stay in China under the visa exemption policies cannot be extended in China.

The changing policies and practices in the country's immigration regime appear to be aimed at easing travel into China by foreign nationals from certain countries and facilitating business and trading, work, and study in China by such foreign nationals.

Background

Besides the new six countries, China had already implemented unilateral visa exemptions for citizens of **Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia**, good until 30 November 2024. (For prior coverage, see [GMS Flash Alert 2023-245](#), 19 December 2023.)

KPMG INSIGHTS

The PRC government also introduced new measures to further facilitate the entry of foreign nationals, such as accepting visa extensions in local Public Security Bureaux (“PSB”), which will help save foreign nationals the necessity – and inconvenience – of frequent travels in and out of China, which proved hard to get approval for in the past. It is worth mentioning that a strong business justification is needed when applying for a visa extension in China. The final approval would still be at the discretion of local PSB officer.

It may be worthwhile for international business travellers who travel to China, especially those who are eligible for a visa exemption, to regularly review and assess their travel plans, keep track of the duration of stay accumulated in China, and document the nature and purposes of the activities (to be) performed in the country.

It is important to plan ahead in respect of the business traveller’s personal immigration status and cross-border tax arrangements.

Travellers who foresee their stay in China exceeding the permitted duration under the visa exemption policies may wish to contact their usual immigration counsel or a KPMG immigration consultant (see the Contact Us section) for assistance to make sure the necessary arrangements are made to meet the needs of the traveller’s trip.

FOOTNOTE:

1 See: http://cs.mfa.gov.cn/qyls/lsgz/fwxx/202403/t20240307_11255438.shtml .

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Contact us

For additional information or assistance, please contact your local GMS or People Services professional* or the following professional with the KPMG International member firm in the People's Republic of China:



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** Please note the KPMG International member firm in the United States does not provide immigration or labour law services. However, KPMG Law LLP in Canada can assist clients with U.S. immigration matters.*

The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in the People's Republic of China.

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