

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

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People's Republic of China – Expansion of Visa-Free Entry Policies and Streamlining of Visa Processes

China has announced new measures to expand its visa-free entry policies and streamline visa processes, aiming to facilitate inbound travel and boost service sector exports. These initiatives are detailed in the “Policy Measures on Promoting the Export of Travel Services and Expanding Inbound Consumption” (the “Measures”) issued by the Ministry of Commerce and eight other departments on 20 March 2026.¹

WHY THIS MATTERS

For employers, global mobility professionals, and internationally mobile employees, the expansion of China’s visa-free entry arrangements could reduce administrative complexity and compliance exposure while planning travel or assignments into China. By widening the scope of visa-free entry and mutual exemption agreements, organizations may experience greater flexibility for business, tourism, education, and healthcare travel, alongside more predictable entry processes for eligible foreign nationals. Employees and visitors may benefit from simplified entry requirements, shorter processing times, and enhanced service infrastructure supporting inbound travel.

Key Highlights

The Measures set out specific directives to enhance China’s visa regimes, as highlighted below.

Expansion of visa-free policies

- China is expected to “orderly expand the list of countries eligible for unilateral visa-free entry,” indicating a phased approach to including more countries in its visa-free policy.
- Transit visa-free policies could be “continuously enhanced,” potentially allowing for more nationalities and longer stay durations in transit without a visa.

Streamlining of visa processes

In addition, a series of measures have been introduced to streamline visa processes:

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- **Introduction of an electronic visa system**, aimed at improving efficiency and reducing processing time.
- **Online submission of Arrival Cards to China**, expanded online support is planned to further streamline the travel experience for travelers.
- **Simplification of visa approval procedures** for foreigners participating in exhibitions, sporting events, and other activities in China, including the removal of certain documentation requirements (such as commitment letters from inviting parties).
- **Provision of locally accessible visa extension and related services** for business travelers attending national exhibitions in China.

Detailed implementation measures relating to the aforementioned arrangements are subject to further clarification and official release by the relevant Chinese authorities.

KPMG INSIGHTS

The expansion of visa-free policies and streamlining of visa processes are expected to make China a more accessible destination for travelers, supporting increased flows of tourism, business travel, international education, and medical services. Reduced entry barriers and enhanced digital services may lower operational risk for global mobility programs.

In response to these developments, organizations might wish to consider the following:

- Monitor official Chinese government announcements for changes to eligible country lists and implementation timelines.
- Review internal travel and mobility policies to reflect latest visa policies.
- Assess the potential impact on short-term business travel, project-based assignments, and compliance monitoring processes.

If assignees and/or their programme managers have any questions or concerns about the scope of the update, its application and potential impacts, and appropriate next steps, they should consult with their qualified professional or a member of the GMS team with KPMG in China (see the Contacts section).

ENDNOTE:

1 Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (in Chinese), "[Policy measures on promoting the export of travel services and expanding inbound consumption](#)," published on 20 March 2026.

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Contacts

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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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