

ETC RECOMMENDS FULL LIBERALIZATION OF VISAS FOR CHINESE TRAVELERS



The European Tourism Commission (ETC) called last week for the full liberalization of the visa regime for Chinese travelers in order to exploit the world's largest travel market.

In a press release, ETC, an association of 32 national tourism organizations, announced the publication of a report predicting the growth in income and employment that would result from visa facilitation for Chinese travelers.

"The results show that visa liberalization would undoubtedly increase demand for one of the most lucrative source markets and contribute to GDP and employment growth in Europe," the statement said.

"The analysis estimates that a scenario of full visa liberalization between China and the European Union would increase the average growth of Chinese arrivals from 7% to 18% per year between 2018 and 2023."

"This in turn would generate additional incoming expenditure of €12.5 billion per year and increase the total employment level by almost 1%, creating 237,000 additional jobs, including 120,000 directly in the travel and tourism sector. This would contribute to a 1% increase in Europe's GDP," the statement said.

Considering that, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, "visa regimes in Europe are among the most restrictive in the world", the ETC added that "it is imperative that EU visa policy be modernized and improved in order to further facilitate travel from key markets".

Robert Andrzejczyk, Vice-President of the ETC and coordinator of ETC visa advocacy work, said in a statement that **"the liberalization of European visa regimes for Chinese travelers is essential if the continent is to maximize its share of the benefits from the growth of the Chinese tourism market** in the decades to come. Europe needs more than ever to ensure job creation and investing in visa liberalization targeting key markets can help to achieve this objective efficiently and effectively.

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