

MORE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO GO VISA-FREE TO VISIT CHINA



China announced last week that citizens of Greece and Slovenia will soon be visa-free for 15-day stays. This announcement comes a few days after a similar statement regarding Norwegian nationals.

During the visit to China earlier this month, Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre met with Chinese President Xi Jinping. During the meeting, the Chinese president announced that **Norwegians would soon be allowed to travel to China without applying for a visa.**

"This will make traveling to China much easier for Norwegian business representatives, students, and other stakeholders. It also lays the foundations for closer cooperation," said Prime Minister Støre.

With the upcoming addition of these three countries, at least 18 countries will benefit from a visa waiver in China for tourism, trade, family visits, or transit until December 31, 2025.

As of December 1, 2023, the Middle Kingdom has granted 15-day visa-free entry to visitors from Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia.

Travelers from Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, Hungary, and Austria can enter China without a visa since March 14, 2024.

As of July 1, 2024, Poland, Australia, and New Zealand citizens are now included in the list of visa-free states.

The United Kingdom hopes China's visa-free policy will soon be extended to British nationals.

The Chinese visa waiver serves several objectives. First, it aims to boost inbound tourism in China, a thriving sector before the pandemic and is now slowly recovering. China is looking to reclaim its leading position in the global tourism industry, and this initiative, which was introduced at the end of last year, could attract more visitors, mostly from Europe.

Additionally, this visa facilitation policy also aims to promote trade. Eliminating the visa requirement for eligible businesspeople simplifies short-term business trips, facilitating negotiations and business relations.

Also, **the procedures have become easier for nationals requiring a visa within a year.** China has streamlined its visa application form, eliminated its COVID-19 travel requirements, removed the need to schedule an appointment to submit a visa application, reduced its consular fees, and waived fingerprinting requirements for eligible applicants until December 31, 2025.

Date: 2024-09-30

Article link: <https://www.tourism-review.com/more-countries-travel-to-china-visa-free-news14616>