

1.4 million

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It takes up to five work days for administrators to review the submitted papers, and then the applicants are required to go to them in person with the papers to finalize the process.

The eventual web application for work and residence permit applications in Shanghai will function in a similar way, which means that the applicants will have to go to the administrators in person after uploading their papers on the Internet.

The exit-entry administration bureau said it's working closely with the administration of foreign experts affairs, the issuer of work permits, on the new system.

In Shanghai, people from overseas who seek exit-entry services are enjoying more and more convenience through online reservations and applications.

Back in 2019, Shanghai became the first city in China to enable online residence registration for people from overseas.

People from overseas are required to register their residence on the Chinese mainland within 24 hours of arrival. Previously, apart from those staying in hotels, everyone had to go to a police station to register their temporary address.

By further relaxing the exit-entry rules for qualified foreign investors, innovators and skilled workers in March last year, Shanghai hopes to attract more foreign talent to the city.

According to the new policies from the city government, foreign talent working in science and technology who meet certain requirements are able to have part-time jobs that are related to their full-time jobs.



An exit-entry officer talks to two expats about the “single window” service for the application of work and residence permits at the city's largest exit-entry service center on Minsheng Road. — Jiang Qichao

Also, foreign researchers participating in China's national task forces and young foreign talent, including recent doctoral graduates from key disciplines such as science, engineering, agriculture and medicine, may apply for an R visa (for top talent) with a validity period of up to 10 years upon identification by the city's administration of foreign experts affairs.

Shanghai has introduced several key policy packages to draw foreign talent since 2015, and more are being mulled, according to the exit-entry administrators.

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Guangdong Province led in all provinces and municipalities directly under the central government in the number of residents from overseas who totaled 418,509. The number for Shanghai, which ranked third, was 163,954.

The ABCs you need to know about working in China...

Q: How do foreigners work legally in Shanghai?

A: Foreigners who work in China shall obtain work permits and work-type residence permits in accordance with relevant regulations. No entities shall employ foreigners who don't possess the above permits.

Q: Who are qualified to apply for foreigner's work permit in China?

A: The applicants, with qualified professional skills or knowledge, shall have a clearly-defined employer in China and shall be at least 18 years old and in good health with no criminal record. They shall also be urgently needed professionals for China on jobs that contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

Q: How are employed foreign talent classified in China when applying for a work permit, and

is there a quota for foreigners' work permit?

A: Foreign talent in China are classified as Foreign High-end Talent (Category A), Foreign Professionals (Category B) and Other Foreigners (Category C) according to their qualifications. There is no quota for Category A talent, and the quota for Category B talent is subject to market needs. The quota for Category C talent is determined by relevant legal regulations in China. The largest number of foreign talent in China falls in Category B.

Q: Do foreigners with permanent residence permit in China need to apply for foreigner's work permit?

A: No, but if they want to enjoy greater convenience in Shanghai, they may apply for it.

(Source: Shanghai Research & Development Public Service Platform)