

# China

## Information for applicants

### China

Since the market reform of 1978, China has been transforming from a centrally planned economy into a market economy. With a population of 1.3 billion, the People's Republic is the world's second largest economy and plays a key role in global economic development. Stretching from the Pacific Ocean in the east to the Himalayas in the west, it is a country that conjures up images of magnificent buildings, enchanting temples and state-of-the-art skyscrapers. With a population of around 1.45 billion and the world's second largest economy, the People's Republic plays a key role in the development of the global economy and the protection of global public goods. The most widely spoken language in China is Mandarin. The Cantonese dialect is mainly spoken in Guangdong and Hong Kong. In general, everyday life in Beijing can be managed without knowledge of Mandarin, although it is significantly simplified by it.

### Medical care

China does not have a system of general practitioners. Instead, health care provision centres around hospitals. While the major cities have very large hospitals with the latest equipment, medical care can still be very basic in rural areas. The language barrier and an unfamiliar medical culture are the main challenges for foreigners.

### Living locally, finding accommodation

Beijing has been the cultural centre of China for centuries and is dotted with UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as the Great Wall of China and the Forbidden City. Today, various world-class theatres and museums, cinemas and bars as well as local cultural institutions - from Beijing Opera to tea ceremonies to the "798" art district - contribute to a diverse cultural offering. All major cities have gyms and sports clubs offering, for example, swimming or tennis. China is known worldwide for its culinary arts. But even those who prefer Western cuisine will get their money's worth in Beijing. Most colleagues live centrally, in the districts of Chaoyang, Dongcheng or Xicheng. According to comparison portals, rents in Beijing are between the averages of Berlin and Frankfurt. However, colleagues report higher prices in areas close to offices. Wi-Fi and high-speed internet access are available throughout China; mobile internet is sometimes faster than in Germany. In accordance with Chinese law, however, many websites are blocked, including the search service Google and various social media (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) and newspapers (e.g. NY Times and Süddeutsche Zeitung). These filters can easily be technically circumvented by so-called VPNs, which are officially banned in China but are widespread in practice.

### Shops and services

Chinese supermarkets stock a full range of food and daily essentials. In big cities, there are also foreign supermarket chains with a wide range of products. In Beijing's shopping centres, all the well-known brands are represented, as well as exclusive

goods. Online platforms now represent a large part of consumption. Payment transactions in renminbi (also: yuan) are unproblematic and largely cashless - this applies to taxi rides as well as food markets.

## Climate

Continental in the north, subtropical in the south. Beijing is characterised by a continental climate. This usually ensures warm, humid summers with temperatures of ø 25 °C (June-August) and dry, cold winters with temperatures below freezing (ø -2 °C from December to January).

## Public infrastructure and transport

Beijing has a modern and inexpensive underground system as well as regularly scheduled buses. In contrast to Germany, taxis are an affordable alternative. You can get around quickly on Beijing's wide cycle paths, but you have to be careful in traffic. There is also a close-knit and inexpensive bicycle rental system. The high-speed network in particular has recently been massively expanded. People who travel in China usually do so by train, bus or plane. Most provincial cities, also in the western regions, can be reached comparatively cheaply, quickly and comfortably.

## Schools

Many major Chinese cities now have international schools and kindergartens. The language of instruction is usually English, though there are two German schools in Beijing and Shanghai and it is

possible to take subjects in German at international schools in other cities such as Suzhou, Wuxi and Qingdao.

## Childcare

There is appropriate kindergarten provision.

## Find out more

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/china-node/china/228916>

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/377.html>

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