

Navigating Mainland China fact sheet

The Dutch Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, through the initiative of our China Committee, has created *the Navigating Mainland China fact sheet* to help you plan your travel to and within Mainland China. This sheet will help you effortlessly navigate both the modern cities and the stunning countryside.

Travel to Mainland China

Convenient ways to travel from Hong Kong to Mainland China include:

- MTR East Rail line (departs from Admiralty station) to Lo Wu & Lok Ma Chau stations
- Bus (multiple operators from various locations in Hong Kong)
- High-speed rail (from West Kowloon railway station, read more about it [here](#))
- Taxi to Heung Yuen Wai, Lo Wu, Lok Ma Chau, Man Kam and Shenzhen Bay Port
- Airplane (from HKG International Airport)

Check timetables and border crossing hours in advance.

Visa requirements

Dutch passport holders can now travel visa-free for tourism, business, and transit until at least 31 December 2025, with a maximum stay of 15 days. For other purposes or longer stays, a visa is necessary, obtainable at the Chinese visa office in Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Click [here](#) for Visa exempted EU countries.

Navigation

As Google is unavailable in China, Google Maps is not a convenient navigation app. English alternatives include Apple Maps (well-integrated with public transport and traffic conditions) and MAPS.ME (supports offline use). Chinese options are Amap (with DiDi and AliPay/WeChat payment) and Baidu.

Mobile data

E-sim

Getting an e-SIM is a convenient method for mobile data, easily purchased through an app on your phone. Airalo is a known vendor.

Sim card from Hong Kong

Another option is to purchase a physical SIM card in Hong Kong before your departure, available at vendors like 7-Eleven. This will still give you access to apps like WhatsApp in China.

Local sim card

You can also get a local phone number. This could be the preferred option, as some web registrations in Mainland China may necessitate a Chinese phone number (starting with +86). At the Futian and Luohu border crossings in Shenzhen, numerous shops sell local SIM cards and provide assistance with real-name verification.

Virtual Private Network (VPN)

Some websites and apps are restricted in the Chinese network, including certain (Dutch) news outlets, information sources like Wikipedia, and social media. To bypass this blockade, use a virtual private network (VPN), with Astrill, VPN Express and NordVPN being well-known options. VPN needs to be installed before travelling to the Mainland.

Paying

While cash is occasionally accepted, it has become increasingly rare in Mainland China. The predominant method of payment for most transactions are the mobile apps **AliPay** or **WeChat Pay**.



Download the AliPay and/or WeChat app on your phone and go through the setting-up process, then link your foreign credit card to your AliPay or WeChat account. For AliPay, refer to the [guide](#) by the Benelux Chamber of Commerce in China for assistance in setting up.

Note:

- We recommend using the AliPay app designed for Mainland China, as the AliPay HK app may not always work there.
- Ensure that your WeChat Pay is set up for transactions in Mainland China by going to "Me," selecting "Services," and choosing "Switch Wallet Region" in the top right corner, then setting it to China Mainland.

Transportation in Mainland China

For short-distance travel in Mainland China, it is most convenient to utilise the well-developed metro systems in Chinese cities, order a DiDi ride on your phone, or hail a taxi. For longer distances, you have the option of using the extensive high-speed rail network in China or air travel.



Order a DiDi ride

Perhaps the most convenient way to travel short distances is by ordering a DiDi ride through your phone. DiDi rides are affordable and hassle-free, and deliver a door-to-door service. Use the AliPay app (standard built-in) or the Amap app for easy DiDi bookings.



Mainland Travel Permit for Hong Kong and Macao Permanent Residents (Non-Chinese Citizens)

Starting from 10 July 2024, Permanent residents in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region who are non-Chinese citizens can now apply for this new permit. It will entitle you a maximum stay of 90 days. The Permit will be valid for 5 years.

The following documents should be prepared before making an [appointment](#) at China Travel Service:

- Access to Information (click [here](#) to obtain it from Hong Kong Immigration)
- Photo (requires same specifications as the Home Return Permit)
- Copy passport (front cover and particulars page)
- Copy Chinese Visa (if applicable)
- Copy HKID

Emergency numbers

Dial **110** for Police or **119** for the Fire department or **120** for an ambulance
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Beijing: **+86-10-8532 0200**

