IETF Venue Assessment Report: Beijing, China

This is a recommendation made by the IETF Executive Director with respect to the appropriateness of Beijing, China as a viable location for an IETF meeting, based on the assessment made by the IETF Secretariat of mandatory and important criteria taken from the requirements documented in RFC 8718[1].

Recommendation

This is a **preliminary report** made on 22 May 2023 prior to community feedback.

Based on the assessment below of the conditions for hosting an IETF meeting in Beijing, China, it is not yet possible to make a recommendation and community feedback is required to assist with the assessment before a final recommendation can be made.

Classification system

This assessment uses the following classification system for each criterion:

Assessment	Indicator
Met	🟩
Uncertain but possible	🟨
Not met	🟥
Unable to assess / not assessed	⬜

Methodology
Each test is applied on a <u>country</u>, <u>city</u> or <u>venue</u> basis. For some, local level exceptions may be considered. Some tests use an external source with no IETF LLC judgement. Others require the IETF LLC to assess multiple sources and make a judgement, as does community feedback. A venue must meet all mandatory criteria to be approved.

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[1] https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc8718

Assessment of individual criteria

CRITERION: City includes one or more venues able to accommodate an IETF meeting (*mandatory*[2]).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
1.1	<u>Venue</u>: Possible venues evaluated for size and general location acceptable to hold an IETF meeting	Beijing has multiple hotels capable of hosting a meeting. At least one of those venues is acceptable.	

CRITERION: The level of Internet freedom is acceptable (*mandatory*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
2.1	<u>Country</u>: VPNs can be freely used *Region/City exceptions may override*	VPNs cannot be used freely in China, but local contacts consider it will be possible to arrange unfiltered Internet for the meeting space and main hotel. It is not clear to the LLC if this will satisfy the community requirement for Internet freedom and so this criterion is marked **uncertain**. https://www.comparitech.com/vpn/where-are-vpns-legal-banned/	

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[2] Corresponds to RFC 8718, section 3.1 Mandatory Criteria

CRITERION: An overwhelming majority of participants who wish to do so can attend (*important[3]*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
3.1	<u>Country</u>: Visa requirements are such that 80% of IETF attendees will be able to obtain a visa without excessive effort or cost	It is difficult to determine whether 80% of attendees, by country, can or cannot enter China without a visa or through a standard application process at reasonable cost. The current challenges appear to relate to COVID. Tourist visas are linked to joining a tour group and F Visas (which appear to be the appropriate visa classification, may or may not be currently available. This criterion is assessed as **uncertain**. http://th.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zgqz/qzjj/	

CRITERION: Travel risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
4.1	<u>Country</u>: US State Dept travel advisory[4] is at level 1 (*Exercise Normal Precautions*) or level 2 (*Exercise Increased Caution*) and not at level 3 (*Reconsider Travel*) or level 4 (*Do Not Travel*) *Region/City exceptions may override*	US State Dept travel advisory is currently at "Level 3 - Reconsider Travel" due to "arbitrary enforcement of local laws" leading to an assessment of **not met**. https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages/China.html	

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[3] Corresponds to RFC 8718, section 3.2.1 important Criteria
[4] https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html

CRITERION: Health risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

#	Test	Assessment	Indicator
5.1	<u>Country</u>: No local disease outbreak or epidemic or regular vaccination requirements[5][6] for serious diseases other than those we expect all attendees to be vaccinated against (*Currently: Chickenpox, Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis, Polio, Rabies, Rubella,Tetanus and Typhoid*) *Region/City exceptions may override*	This is **met** as there is no local disease outbreak or epidemic (other than COVID) or required vaccinations other than those we expect all attendees to be vaccinated against. https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/ireland https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news	
5.2	<u>City</u>: Air Quality Index[7] in March, July or November is below 50 (*Good*), or below 100 (*Moderate*) or below 150 (*Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups*) for at least 16 days of the month for 2017-2022.	The historical data for November AQI (PM2.5) for all years from 2017 through 2022 meet the criteria but 2016 does not. We have made a judgment call that this criterion is **met**. https://aqicn.org/city/beijing/	

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[5]
https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/vaccination-requirements-and-recommendations-for-international-travelers-and-malaria-situation-per-country-2020-edition
[6] https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list
[7] https://aqicn.org/map/world/

CRITERION: Human rights risks associated with holding an IETF meeting are acceptable (*important*).

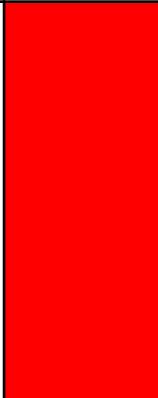| #	Test	Assessment	Indicator
6.1	<u>Country</u>: Women Peace and Security Index[8] score from the Georgetown Institute of Women, Peace and Security is above 0.7[9] *Region/City exceptions may override*	WPS Index score of .722 is in the required range to be **met**.	
6.2	<u>Country</u>: Safe for LGBT people, researched on an individual basis using multiple sources including Global LGBT Acceptance Index[10], Asher and Lyric Fergusson LGBTQ+ Danger Index[11] and others found at the time of assessment. *Region/City exceptions may override*	It is increasingly difficult to assess this: there is an increasing disconnect between laws and experiences of travelers; and assessment indices increasingly include factors that primarily affect residents and not travelers (e.g. access to gender reassignment surgery). On the two indices listed in the test, China is rated below an acceptable score, but the lived experience contradicts that (see link below) and identifies this as a highly region/city specific issue. Therefore this indicator is left as **uncertain**. https://queerintheworld.com/lgbt-rights-in-china/	

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[8] https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/
[9] This test previously required a country to be in the top two quintiles but the general scores have all lifted and so this has switched to an indicative measure.
[10] https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/projects/gai/
[11] https://www.asherfergusson.com/lgbtq-travel-safety/

| 6.3 | Country: No significant discrimination or persecution of religious freedoms, researched on an individual basis using multiple sources including World Bank[12], Religious Freedom Report[13] and others found at the time of assessment. *Region/City exceptions may override* | The level of religious freedom on the World Bank index is very low at 0.12 for 2020, and multiple reports detail extensive religious persecution. The situation in Beijing may be different but without clear evidence of that, this criteria is assessed as **not met**. https://religious-freedom-report.org/#map https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/441219-CHINA-2022-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf https://govdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/hd6a18526?country=CHN&indicator=41930&viz=line_chart&years=2010,2020 | |

Additional sources including community feedback

- We have spoken extensively with regular IETF participants from China on the issue of Internet access.
- Community feedback will be incorporated into the next revision of this report.

Summary

Of the two mandatory criteria, one is met and the other, Internet Freedom, is uncertain and left to the community to assess. Of the seven important criteria, three are met, two are unmet and two are uncertain. China is a large country and some degree of regional/city exemptions may be considered but data on those is insufficient.

Date of assessment and recommendation: 22 May 2023

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[12] https://govdata360.worldbank.org/indicators/hd6a18526?indicator=41930&viz=line_chart&years=2010,2020
[13] https://religious-freedom-report.org/#map