

COTRI publishes Chinese outbound tourist arrival data for H1 2018

Hamburg 23.08.2018. Having provided its own statistics related to Chinese outbound border crossings since 2015, COTRI China Outbound Tourism Research Institute has released its final data for H1 2018.

H1 2018 saw 80 million worldwide border crossings made by Chinese nationals, representing year-on-year growth of 16.4%. This strong upturn is built upon a successful Q2, during which Chinese made 42 million border crossings – a 15.9% increase against 2017's equivalent figure.

Among these figures, the Greater China region (Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR, Taiwan) accounted for 17.8 million of Q2 2018's global Chinese arrivals (corresponding to 42.4% of the total) and 36.7 million for the whole H1 2018 period (45.9% of total).

The successful first half of 2018 has seen a return to double digit year-on-year growth rates following the more modest results posted in 2017. Last year's equivalent results saw 36,250,000 border crossings (+7.2% YoY) in Q2, while 68,750,000 trips were recorded for the whole first half of 2017 (+7.4% YoY).

A key driver has been the strong performances of the Hong Kong and Macau SARs in 2018 so far. Hong Kong, which is benefitting from the weakening of the Hong Kong Dollar against the Renminbi, saw 11.5 million Mainland arrivals in Q2 2018 – almost 1.5 million visitors (+14.3% YoY) more than Q2 2017 – while Macau's total of Mainland visitors grew by 600,000 (+13% YoY) during the same period.

Other regional destinations also saw significant increases in visitors from China in the second quarter of 2018. South Korea, for example, recorded a remarkable year-on-year increase in Chinese arrivals of almost 52% following the end of the moratorium on package groups that followed the political fallout surrounding Seoul's hosting of the US THAAD missile system. Nevertheless, the 1.1 million arrivals recorded during Q2 2018 are still significantly lower than the 2.1 million seen in Q2 2016.

With 2.1 million and 1.2 million Mainland arrivals respectively, Japan and Vietnam both saw almost 30% year-on-year growth in Q2 2018. As recently as Q2 2013, Japan had recorded just over 280,000 Chinese arrivals, meaning that Q2 2018 marked a sevenfold increase in only half a decade.

This strong growth comes in spite of fears of the effects of the ongoing China-US Trade War. With the wealth of Chinese consumers that are able to afford overseas travel – the top 10% of society – remaining unaffected in the short term, any potential impact is unlikely to be felt in 2018.

In light of the recent development, COTRI's initial 2018 forecast of 154 million (a 6% year-on-year increase against 2017's total of 145 million), is being updated to 160 million. This would consist of 75 million arrivals in Greater Chinese destinations (47% of total) and 85 million in destinations in the rest of the world (53%). These calculations are made in presumption of an absence of "Black Swan" events.

Further analysis of growth trends in the Chinese outbound travel market, as well as dissection of traveller demographics, purpose of travel, residence and other characteristics can be found within [COTRI Analytics](#).

Frequently updated statistics related to the Chinese outbound market can be found in the [China Outbound Latest](#) section of the COTRI website. For further information, or other media enquiries, please contact Christopher Ledsham at ledsham@china-outbound.com