

## Wuhan/ Central China

### Introduction

Wuhan remains the commercial, financial, and transportation center of Central China and ranks as one of the top ten Chinese Cities of Opportunity 2023. With more than one hundred colleges and universities and 1.2 million university students, it is a key source of talent for AmCham China members. As of 2023, Hubei boasted a total of 88 national-level research centers, enterprise technology centers, and innovation centers. In the 14<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (FYP), the Wuhan municipal government set a goal of making Wuhan into a modern metropolis known as “Five Centers”: ❶ a national economic center, ❷ a national science and technology innovation center, ❸ a national commercial and trade logistics center, ❹ an international communications center, and ❺ a regional financial center; and to this end has prioritized development in nine pillar industries, six new emerging industries, and five industries of the future. Hubei Province issued a similar “4+6+8” plan. Foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs) that invest in these industries are likely to receive additional support from the Wuhan municipal and Hubei provincial governments.

AmCham China members in Central China remain cautiously optimistic moving into 2024. According to AmCham China’s *Business Climate Survey* members’ two-year outlook on business, profit, the regulatory environment, US-China relations, and economic recovery, the results remain mixed. Hubei achieved nominal GDP gain of 6.0%, and Wuhan 5.7% in 2023. Foreign direct investment in Hubei was up 11.39%, Wuhan’s up 2.04%; foreign trade was up in Hubei 5.8%, Wuhan 2.9%. Despite tensions in the US-China relationship, more than half of Central Chapter member companies reported feeling as welcome or more welcome than before, and 80% report being treated equally with domestic companies or more favorably. Member companies cite favorable foreign direct investment policies and a rising middle class as their top reasons to invest in the Central China region.

Member companies applaud the ongoing efforts to improve US-China relations at the regional level, attract top talent, improve healthcare for expatriates as well as commitments to expand, stabilize, and improve the quality of foreign investment in Hubei Province. Nevertheless, challenges remain. Topping the list of challenges among member

companies in the Central China chapter are tensions in the US-China relationship. Member companies in Wuhan and Hubei also continue to struggle with attracting high and mid-level talents, healthcare, access to fully functioning consulates, and a challenging expatriate education market due to oversaturation.

This chapter reflects the activities of AmCham China members in the Central China region, which includes Hunan, Henan, Hubei, and Jiangxi provinces. With the majority of our Central China region members located in Wuhan and Hubei Province, our recommendations are primarily directed to the governments in those locations.

### Ongoing Regulatory Issues

#### *Attracting and Retaining High- and Mid-Level Talent*

The Report of the 20th National Congress of the CPC elevated talents to a highly strategic position, designating it as a primary resource even writing it into the CPC Constitution.

Wuhan and Hubei governments have released effective policies aimed towards attracting global and top-level experts and entrepreneurial talents. Both the provincial and city level have attracted top level technology and vibrant start-ups, which have significantly contributed to economic development, through policies such as ‘Huanghe Yingcai’, ‘Wuhan Yingcai’, and ‘3551 Talent’.

Nevertheless, securing top-tier and mid-tier talent resources remains a challenge for enterprises in Wuhan. Those talents compose the majority and core strength in an enterprise’s development. Central China member companies list their top three HR priorities as engaging and retaining employees, finding and onboarding talent, and developing talent. If Wuhan aims to enhance, or even maintain its position as one of the top tier “high-tech” cities in China, it must retain and develop talented senior managers and team leaders.

Hubei and Wuhan governments should adopt innovative and focused policies to attract, retain, and develop high- and mid-level senior managers and team leaders in the technology sector. In addition to attracting talent from outside

# 武汉与华中

## 引言

**武**汉市是华中地区的商业、金融和交通中心，位列 2023 年中国十大机遇之城。武汉拥有 100 多所高校和 120 万名大学生，是中国美国商会（以下简称商会）会员企业人才的重要来源。2023 年，湖北省的国家级研究中心、企业技术中心和创新中心数量达到了 88 个。“十四五”期间，武汉市政府提出了“五大中心”建设目标：① 全国经济中心；② 国家科技创新中心；③ 全国商贸物流中心；④ 国际交往中心；⑤ 地区金融中心。为实现上述目标，武汉市政府还提出了“965”产业集群发展思路，形成“九大支柱产业，六大新兴产业，五大未来产业”架构的产业格局，湖北省也提出着力打造具有湖北特色的“4+6+8”现代制造业体系。投资这些产业的外资企业可能会获得湖北省和武汉市政府的额外支持。

商会华中地区会员企业对 2024 年的营商环境保持谨慎乐观态度。根据商会发布的《中国营商环境调查报告》，华总地区会员企业对未来两年的业务、利润、监管环境、美中关系和经济复苏的预期各不相同。湖北省的名义 GDP 增长率为 6.0%，武汉为 5.7%。湖北省的外国直接投资上升了 11.39%，武汉增长了 2.04%；湖北省的外贸额增长了 5.8%，而武汉为 2.9%。尽管美中关系紧张，但超过一半的华中地区会员企业表示他们感觉比以前更受欢迎，同时 80% 的公司表示，他们受到与国内公司平等或更加优惠的待遇。会员企业表示，优惠的外国直接投资政策和不断壮大的中产阶级是他们在华中地区投资的主要原因。

本地政府在改善美中关系方面持续努力，实施了包括吸引顶尖人才、改善外籍人员医疗保健，以及扩大、

稳定和提高外国投资质量等措施。然而，本地会员企业依然面临一些挑战，其中最主要的挑战是中美关系的紧张局势。另外，湖北省和武汉市的会员企业还在吸引中高端人才、外籍人员医疗保健、获得更加完善的领事服务以及外籍人员教育市场过度饱和等方面面临问题。

本章反映了商会华中地区会员企业的活动，该地区包括湖南、河南、湖北和江西省。由于我们在华中地区的大部分会员企业位于湖北省和武汉市，因此我们的建议主要针对这些地区的政府。

## 持续的监管问题

### 吸引和留住中高端人才

中国共产党第二十次全国代表大会报告将人才提升到了战略高度，并将其确定为主要资源，甚至写入了党章。

湖北省和武汉市政府采取有效政策来吸引全球顶尖技术人才和创业人才。省市两级通过“黄鹤英才”计划、“武汉英才”计划和“3551 光谷人才”计划等措施，吸引了拥有顶级技术和充满活力的初创企业，极大地促进了经济发展。

然而，对于武汉市本地企业而言，吸引中高端（高管或高级别，相对于顶级而言较低的层级）人才资源仍然是一个挑战。人才是企业发展的主体和核心力量。华中地区的会员企业将人力资源的前三项重点任务列为吸引和留住人才、发现和吸纳人才以及培养人才。武汉想要提升或保持其作为国内一流“高科技”城市之一的地位，留住和吸引高级管理人才和团队领导者至关重要。

湖北省和武汉市政府应采取创新和有针对性的政

Wuhan and Hubei, cultivating talent locally proves to be an efficient method for talent acquisition. The governments of Hubei and Wuhan should take the lead in establishing or investing in talent cultivation platforms or incentivize industrial stakeholders to establish such platforms by creating supportive policy environments. This strategic investment will contribute to the continuous development of a skilled workforce, particularly senior managers and team leaders, thereby bolstering the current and future economic growth of Wuhan and Hubei.

### ***More People-to-People Exchanges (Hubei and Wuhan Governments)***

AmCham China's Central China member companies reported rising tensions in US-China relations as their biggest business challenge in 2023 and expect it to remain a key challenge in 2024. AmCham China recognizes that while differences between world powers are inevitable, mutual respect is needed to find a floor in the relationship and start making real progress. AmCham Central China would like to recognize the progress made in 2023, including the Hubei-Middle America Mayors Roundtable. AmCham also suggests that both the US and Central China governments foster increased people-to-people exchanges at the sub-national level across various sectors including education, government, environment, economy, and business. Additionally, streamlining the visa application process for employees from both nations to travel overseas is recommended. These measures would enhance mutual understanding at a grassroots level and establish a stronger foundation for long-term cooperation between the two countries.

### ***Health Care for Expatriates***

AmCham China Central China chapter recognizes the significant steps the Wuhan government has taken to improve health care for expatriates. Most major hospitals have established VIP sections which provide additional services to help foreign patients navigate an unfamiliar medical system. Nevertheless, when expatriates go to the hospital, it is quite challenging for them to communicate clearly with the doctors and medical staff due primarily to language barriers. In emergencies, proper care could be delayed due to the language barrier and the different process of registering for care. The language barrier plus navigating the hospital process are additional stresses for expatriates, on top of the medical issue or emergency they are already dealing with. AmCham China suggests implementing policies and offering incentives to attract foreign healthcare providers to establish international hospitals in Wuhan. Additionally, efforts should be made to recruit more foreign medical professionals to hospitals in the city. Establishing a network of English translators proficient in medical terminology would facilitate effective communication between expatriate patients and healthcare staff. Providing information to expatriates about hospitals offering 24/7 language

and navigation support would alleviate a significant source of stress for them and enhance Wuhan's appeal as a living and investment destination.

### ***Support Consulates to Fully Function in the Space They Need***

Wuhan stands out in central China as it hosts four major consulates. In order to enhance diplomatic efficiency and strengthen international relations, it is imperative to advocate for the full empowerment and functionality of consulates within the spaces they occupy. It is highly recommended that the government take the necessary steps to support the consulates so that they can offer full services. By ensuring that consulates have adequate space and support, we further contribute to the prominence of Wuhan and increase its attractiveness to foreigners. In turn, this will contribute to fostering a conducive environment for diplomatic endeavors, facilitating smoother collaboration between nations, and promoting a more robust and interconnected global community within our great city.

### ***Suitable Numbers of Expatriate School Licenses***

AmCham China's Central China Chapter recognizes the significant support the Hubei and Wuhan governments have given to expatriate education over the past years, including opening more schools. Nevertheless, we recommend a limitation on the issuance of new expatriate school licenses. The rationale behind this proposal stems from the evident oversaturation of the market with schools in comparison to the expatriate population. While there is commendable diversity in geographic locations and international curricula offered by these schools, there exists a significant gap in the variety of services provided. Notably, most expatriate schools emphasize top-college placement, neglecting the crucial aspects of special needs education and vocational training. By strategically limiting new expatriate school licenses, AmCham China desires to increase the enrollment of the current schools so that these alternate needs can be addressed in a fiscally sustainable manner. This will foster a more comprehensive and inclusive educational landscape that caters to the diverse needs of expatriate students, ensuring a well-rounded and equitable learning experience for all, thereby making Wuhan a more suitable investment and living destination for expatriates.

## **Recommendations**

### ***For the Wuhan Municipal Government, Hubei, and Other Provincial Governments of Central China:***

- AmCham China recommends adopting innovative

策，侧重吸引、留住和培养科技行业的中高端高级管理人员和团队领导者。除从外部吸引人才外，人才培养也是供给人才的有效途径。湖北省和武汉市政府可牵头建立或投资人才培养平台，或者通过创造扶持政策环境，激励产业利益相关方建立此类平台。这种战略投资将有助于不断培养技术过硬的人才，尤其是高级管理人员和团队领导者，从而促进湖北省和武汉市当前和未来的经济增长。

### 更多的人员交流（湖北和武汉政府）

商会华中地区会员企业称，美中关系紧张是他们在2023年面临的重大商业挑战，并预计在2024年继续成为关键挑战。商会认识到，尽管大国之间存在分歧是不可避免的，但两国需要相互尊重才能找到正确的相处之道，并取得真正的进展。商会华中地区会员企业对2023年美中关系改善方面取得的进展表示肯定，其中包括举办了“湖北—美国中部市长圆桌会”等重要活动。商会还建议美国和华中地区政府加强以下层面的人文交流，包括教育、政府、环境、经济和商业等多个领域，促进更多地方层面的人员交流。此外，商会还建议简化两国雇员出国签证申请程序。这些措施将有助于两国基层人民的相互了解，并为两国长期合作奠定更坚实的基础。

### 外籍人士医疗保健

华中地区医疗体系继续得到改善。大多数大型医院已设立了VIP区域，为外籍病人提供额外服务，帮助他们熟悉陌生的医疗系统。然而，外籍人士就诊时，由于语言障碍，他们很难与医生和医务人员进行清楚地沟通。在紧急情况下，由于语言障碍和挂号程序不同，可能会延误治疗。对于外籍人士来说，语言障碍加上陌生的就医流程是他们处理的医疗问题或急诊之外的额外的压力。因此，我们建议采取相关政策并提供激励措施，鼓励国际医疗机构在武汉设立国际医院或招聘更多外国医疗专业人员到本地医院工作。此外，建立一个精通医学术语的英语翻译网络平台，向外籍人士分享有关提供全天候语言和导航支持服务的医院信息，以促进外籍患者与医务人员之间的沟通，缓解外籍人士的就医压力，并使华中地区成为更具吸引力的居住和投资目的地。

### 领事馆提供更加完善的服务

武汉在华中地区独具特色，拥有四个重要的领事馆。为了提高外交效率和加强国际关系，商会倡导在领事馆在职权范围内充分发挥其权力和功能。建议政府采取必要措施支持领事馆，使其能够提供更加全面的服务。这将进一步落实武汉的重要地位，增加对外吸引力。同时，这也将有助于营造更有利的外交环境，促进国家间更顺畅的合作，推动更加强大和互联的全球社区在武汉形成。

### 限制外籍学校办学许可的发放

湖北省和武汉市政府在过去几年大力支持外籍人员教育发展，包括开设更多外籍学校等措施。然而，由于市场中学校数量与外籍人口相比已明显过剩，我们建议限制外籍学校许可证的发放。尽管这些学校的地理位置和国际课程多样性值得称赞，但在提供的服务的多样性方面存在着显著差距。值得注意的是，大多数外籍学校强调顶尖大学录取率，忽视了特殊需求教育和职业培训等重要方面。通过限制新的外籍学校许可证的发放，我们希望增加当前学校的招生人数，用更加经济可持续的方式满足这些替代需求。这将促进更全面和包容的教育格局，满足外籍学生多样化的需求，确保为所有人提供全面和公平的学习体验，从而使武汉成为更适合外籍人士投资和生活的目的地。

## 建议

### 对武汉市、湖北省和其他华中地区省政府：

- 政府采取创新政策，侧重吸引、留住和奖励科技行业的中高端高级管理人员和团队领导者。与在武汉注册的全球行业领导企业合作，将是吸引此类人才、满足市场需求的有效途径。
- 在教育、政府、环境、经济和商业等多个领域促进更多地方层面的人员交流。
- 激励国际医疗机构在武汉设立国际医院或招

and focused policies to attract, retain, and reward high- and mid-level senior managers and team leaders in the technology sector. Partnering with global industry leaders registered in Wuhan on such policies would be an effective way to attract such talent and meet market demand.

- Promote more people-to-people exchanges at the sub-national level in multiple areas: education, government, environment, economic, and business, etc.
- Incentivize foreign healthcare providers to set up an international hospital in Wuhan and/or recruit more foreign medical professionals to Wuhan hospitals as well as establish a network of English translators available 24 hours a day.
- Take the necessary steps to support foreign consulates and their operations so that they can offer full services.
- Strategically limit new expatriate school licenses by carefully assessing the demand and supply of international schools in Wuhan and other areas to prevent excessive competition.

***For the US Government:***

- Promote more people-to-people exchanges at the sub-national level in multiple areas: education, government, environment, economic, and business, etc.

聘更多外国医疗专业人员到武汉的医院就业，并建立一支提供全天候服务的英语翻译团队。

- 采取必要措施支持领事馆及其运作，以便他们能够提供更加全面的服务。
- 通过认真评估武汉和其他地区国际学校的供需情况，战略性地限制新的外籍学校许可证发放，防止过度竞争。

#### **对美国政府：**

- 在教育、政府、环境、经济和商业等多个领域促进更多地方层面的人员交流。