



WASHINGTON, DC UPDATE: DECEMBER 1, 2023

1. WELCOME MARSHA FLANAGAN, NEW ECA CO-PRESIDENT!

ECA welcomes Marsha Flanagan, [new IAAE President & CEO](#), as our new Co-President effective today.

- Thank you to Cathy Breden, CMP, CAE, CEM for serving as interim ECA Co-President this fall!

2. VISA DELAYS GROWING AS A U.S. COMPETITIVENESS ISSUE

In recent days, Canada and China have both turned up the heat on the U.S. on the visa delay issue.

- **Canada:** The Canadian government [announced](#) that travelers from 67 countries can now apply for an expedited visitor visa for tourism, events, and major conferences.
- **China:** From today through November 30, 2024, citizens of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Malaysia will not need a Chinese visa for stays of [less than 15 days](#).

While the U.S. struggles with ongoing visa processing delays, other countries are aggressively courting future international business events with promises of reduced cross-border travel friction.

- **Current status:** Efforts to reduce current U.S. visitor visa appointment wait times remain mixed.

Country	Average wait	Change (last 30 days)	Change (last 90 days)
China	109 days	↑ 17 days	↓ 39 days
Brazil	179 days	↓ 4 days	↑ 4 days
India	366 days	↓ 180 days	↓ 113 days
Mexico	761 days	↑ 22 days	↑ 69 days

Earlier this month, ECA [joined with 65 organizations](#) to call on the Biden Administration to extend all existing visa interview waivers beyond December 31, 2023 and not make the situation worst.

3. ECA TO TALK BOYCOTT PREVENTION AT UPCOMING EVENTS

In the coming days, ECA's Tommy Goodwin will be part of two panel conversations with industry leaders on the importance of avoiding political-related event boycotts:

- **IAEE Expo! Expo!:** On [December 5](#), he will join leaders from Visit Dallas and Barnes & Thornburg LLP for "The Intersection Between Exhibitions and Unending Political and Social Challenges."
- **PCMA Convening Leaders:** On [January 8](#), he will join experts from 360 Live Media and 2 leading associations for "When Politics & Values Collide: Navigating Calls to Boycott A Destination."

ECA sincerely thanks both UFI and EDPA for including ECA as part of its annual events in November!

4. IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- ECA's new partnership with IFES attracted attention from [around the world](#).
- The Iceberg's [latest newsletter](#) has updates from across the global business events industry.
- Join industry leaders and advocates by signing up for ECA's social influencer program [here](#).