

# 2020-2021 TAIWAN

at a Glance



Published by Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Republic of China (Taiwan)

## TAIWAN SNAPSHOT

Official name Republic of China (Taiwan)

National Flag



National Flower Plum blossom

Area (Taiwan and outlying islands) 36,197 square kilometers

Population 23.6 million (2019)

Ethnicity Over 95 percent Han Chinese (including Holo, Hakka and other groups that originated in China), 2 percent indigenous Malayo-Polynesian peoples, 2 percent new immigrants, primarily from China and Southeast Asia

Government Multiparty democracy

President Tsai Ing-wen

Capital Taipei City

Special municipalities Taipei, New Taipei, Taoyuan, Taichung, Tainan, Kaohsiung cities

National currency New Taiwan dollar (NT\$ or TWD)

Languages Mandarin (Chinese), Holo (Taiwanese), Hakka, Austronesian languages

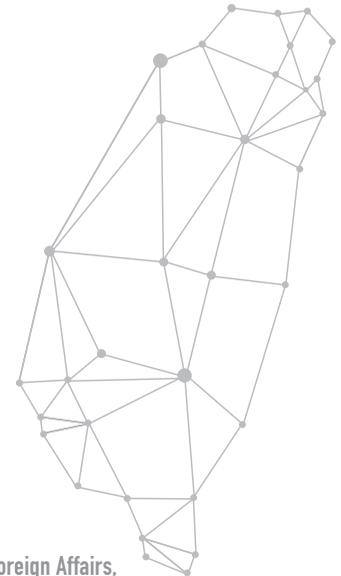
Major religions Buddhism, Taoism, I-Kuan Tao, Chinese folk religions, Christianity, Islam



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# NATURAL TAIWAN

## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan's Jade Mountain is the highest peak in East Asia. Around 20 percent of the country's land area is protected.**

The Republic of China (Taiwan) is situated in the West Pacific between Japan and the Philippines. Its jurisdiction extends to the archipelagoes of Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, as well as numerous other islets. The total area of Taiwan proper and its outlying islands is around 36,197 square kilometers. At about the size of the Netherlands, but with a population of some 23 million, Taiwan is more populous than three-quarters of the world's nations. Taiwan proper has more than its share of natural splendor. Mountain ranges with many peaks reaching over 3,000 meters—including East Asia's highest, Jade Mountain (Yushan)—and forested foothills occupy more than half of its area. The island also



A marine landform at Taiwan's Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area is famous for its distinctive candle-shaped rocks. (Courtesy of Ke Zhih-cheng)

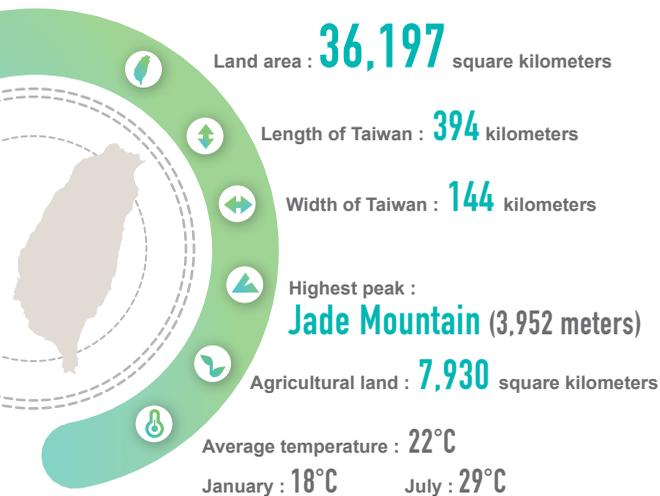
features volcanic mountains, tablelands, coastal plains and basins. The Diaoyutai Islands, which lie northeast of Taiwan, and a number of islands in the South China Sea, including those in the Tungsha (Pratas), Nansha (Spratly), Shisha (Paracel) and Chungsha (Macclesfield Bank) islands, are also part of the territory of the ROC.

Sitting in the path of warm ocean currents off the east coast of continental Asia, Taiwan proper is uniquely blessed with a wide range of climatic zones from

tropical to temperate. This, in combination with fertile soil and abundant rainfall, makes it an agricultural paradise where virtually any kind of fruit or vegetable can be cultivated. It also makes the island a recreational wonderland. In the winter, one can watch the snow fall on the slopes of Hehuan Mountain in Nantou County and then travel a mere 200 kilometers to balmy Pingtung County to enjoy skin diving at coral reefs along the island's southern tip.

The smaller islands, meanwhile, have their own unique natural features, such as the columnar basalt on the Penghu Islands and the marine hot springs along the shores of Green Island and Guishan Island.

## SNAPSHOT



## Flora and Fauna

Taiwan's tropical-to-temperate spectrum of climatic zones and wide range of topographies have endowed the island with a rich diversity of flora and fauna. Some 125 species of mammals, 788 species of birds, 134 species of reptiles, 42 species of amphibians, 454 species of butterflies and 3,265 species of fish are known to inhabit Taiwan. The island's plant life comprises 881 species of ferns, 4,875 species of angiosperms and 36 species of gymnosperms. To protect the ecosystems in which these plants and animals reside, the government has reserved about 20 percent of the nation's land area

as protected areas, comprising nine national parks and one national nature park, 22 nature reserves for special ecosystems, six forest reserve areas, 20 wildlife refuges and 37 major wildlife habitats.

Among the most famous Taiwan species of fauna is the Formosan landlocked salmon (*Oncorhynchus masou formosanus*). The fish is believed to have become trapped in the frigid mountain waters of central Taiwan

during the last ice age when ocean levels dropped dramatically and the salmon could no longer migrate back and forth between fresh water and salt water. To protect the endangered species, the Formosan Landlocked Salmon Refuge was established in the upper reaches of the Dajia River in Shei-Pa National Park.



A female leopard cat receives treatment for an eye infection at the Endemic Species Research Institute in central Taiwan's Nantou County before its release back into the wild.  
(Chen Mei-ling)

## NATIONAL PARKS



Kinmen



South Penghu  
Marine



Dongsha (Tungsha)  
Atoll

Yangmingshan

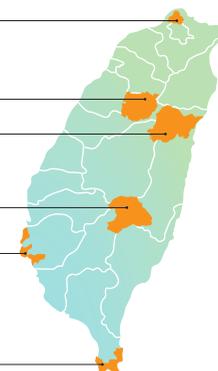
Shei-Pa

Taroko

Yushan

Taijiang

Kenting



# PEOPLE

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## FACT FOCUS

**There are 16 officially recognized indigenous tribes in Taiwan.**

**The nation is home to over 530,000 new immigrants, most of whom hail from China and Southeast Asia.**

While Taiwan may be described as a predominantly Han Chinese society, with more than 95 percent of the population claiming Han ancestry, its heritage is actually much more complex. The successive waves of Chinese immigrants that began arriving in the 17th century belonged to a variety of subgroups with mutually unintelligible languages and different customs. Today in Taiwan, however, distinctions between them have become blurred as a result of extensive intermarriage and the universal use of Mandarin. Taiwan is a multicultural society comprising diverse Han subgroups, as well as indigenous Malayo-Polynesian peoples and immigrants from all over the world. Recent years, for



A woman takes a selfie with her son in Taipei City's Dahu Park.  
(Chen Mei-ling)

## SNAPSHOT

Population: **23,603,121** (2019)

Population structure:

0-14 years:



15-64 years:



65 and above:



Ethnicity:

Han Chinese:



Indigenous peoples:



New immigrants:



Crude birth rate (2019): **7.42** (per 1,000 people)

Crude death rate (2019): **7.44** (per 1,000 people)

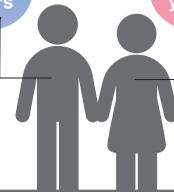
Life expectancy (2019): **80.9** years

Male:

77.7  
years

Female:

84.2  
years



example, have seen an influx of new arrivals from China and Southeast Asia, mostly through marriage. Currently, the number of new immigrants is over 530,000.

There is growing appreciation in Taiwan for the cultural legacies of the 16 officially recognized Austronesian-speaking tribes, which constitute a little more than 2 percent of the population. Public and private organizations are making efforts to revitalize their languages and cultures, as illustrated by the launch of Taiwan Indigenous

Television and the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Basic Act.

This convergence and interplay of currents of humanity in Taiwan have helped transform it into an open-hearted, forward-looking society that has incorporated diverse elements of civilization from around the world in a distinctive and harmonious manner.

# HISTORY

## FACT FOCUS

**Dutch and Spanish settlers established bases in Taiwan in the early 17th century.**

**Around 1.2 million people relocated from China to Taiwan along with the Republic of China (Taiwan) government in the late 1940s and early 1950s.**

The ROC was founded in 1912 in China. At that time, Taiwan was under Japanese colonial rule as a result of the 1895 Treaty of Shimonoseki, by which the Qing ceded Taiwan to Japan. The ROC government began exercising jurisdiction over Taiwan in 1945 after Japan surrendered at the end of World War II.

The ROC government relocated to Taiwan in 1949 while fighting a civil war with the Chinese Communist Party. Since then, the ROC has continued to exercise effective jurisdiction over the main island of Taiwan and a number of outlying islands, leaving Taiwan and China each under the rule of a different government. The



A wind lion statue stands tall in outlying Kinmen County as a guardian to ward off evil spirits and bring good fortune. (Chin Hung-hao)

authorities in Beijing have never exercised sovereignty over Taiwan or other islands administered by the ROC.

## Historical Timeline

The following timeline focuses on Taiwan's recorded history dating from about 400 years ago, although it has been home to Malayo-Polynesian peoples for many millennia.

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**1500s** It is commonly believed that European sailors passing Taiwan record the island's name as Ilha Formosa, or beautiful island.

Taiwan continues to experience visits by small numbers of Chinese merchants, fishermen and pirates.

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**1624** The Dutch East India Company establishes a base in southwestern Taiwan, initiating a transformation in aboriginal grain production practices and employing Chinese laborers to work on its rice and sugar plantations.

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**1626** Spanish adventurers establish bases in northern Taiwan but are ousted by the Dutch in 1642.

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**1662** Fleeing the Manchurian conquest of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), Ming loyalists under Zheng Cheng-gong, or Koxinga, drive out the Dutch from Taiwan and establish authority over the island.

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**1683** Qing dynasty (1644-1912) forces take control of Taiwan's western and northern coastal areas.

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**1885** Taiwan is declared a province of the Qing Empire.

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**1895** Following defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), the Qing government signs the Treaty of Shimonoseki, by which it cedes sovereignty over Taiwan to Japan, which rules the island until 1945.

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**1911-**  
**1912** Chinese revolutionaries overthrow the Qing Empire and establish the ROC.

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**1943** During World War II, ROC leader Chiang Kai-shek meets with U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in Cairo. After the conclusion of the conference, the Cairo Declaration is released, stating that "...Formosa [Taiwan], and the Pescadores [the Penghu Islands], shall be restored to the Republic of China..."

---

**1945** The ROC, U.K. and U.S. jointly issue the Potsdam Declaration, calling for Japan's unconditional surrender and the carrying-out of the Cairo Declaration.

After World War II, ROC government representatives accept the surrender of Japanese forces in Taiwan. The Chief Executive of Taiwan

Province Chen Yi sends a memorandum to the Japanese governor-general of Taiwan, stating that “As the Chief Executive of Taiwan Province of the ROC, ...I restore all legal territory, people, administration, political, economic, and cultural facilities and assets of Taiwan [including the Penghu Islands].”

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**1947** The ROC Constitution is promulgated Jan. 1 and is scheduled to take effect Dec. 25. In March and the following months, ROC troops dispatched from China suppress a large-scale uprising of Taiwan residents sparked by the February 28 Incident.

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**1948** As full-scale civil war rages in China between the Kuomintang-led ROC government and CCP, the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion are enacted, overriding the ROC Constitution and greatly expanding presidential powers. This begins the period of White Terror that lasts until 1991 when the Temporary Provisions are lifted.

---

**1949** The ROC government relocates to Taiwan, followed by 1.2 million people from China.

Oct. 25 sees the Battle of Kuningtou on Kinmen, in which the ROC armed forces defeat the CCP on the northwestern coast of the island.

Martial law is declared in Taiwan and continues to be in force until 1987.

---

**1952** Following the 1951 San Francisco Peace Treaty with Japan signed by 48 Allied nations on behalf of the United Nations, the Treaty of Peace is signed between the ROC and Japan at Taipei Guest House, formally ending the state of war between the two parties. It is recognized that under Article 2 of the San Francisco Treaty, Japan has renounced all right, title, and claim to Taiwan (Formosa) and Penghu (the Pescadores) as well as the Spratly Islands and the Paracel Islands. All treaties, conventions and agreements concluded before Dec. 9, 1941, between China and Japan become null and void as a consequence of the war.

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**1954** The ROC-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty is signed in Washington.

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**1958** Aug. 23 sees the start of an artillery duel between the ROC garrison on Kinmen and Chinese forces that lasts more than 40 days.

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**1966** The first Export Processing Zone is established in Kaohsiung City, southern Taiwan. The creation of such zones propels Taiwan toward becoming a developed nation, setting a paradigm for other countries to follow.

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**1968** The nine-year compulsory education system is launched at a time when fewer than nine countries globally have compulsory education systems of this length or more.

- 
- 1971** On Oct. 25, the United Nations General Assembly passes U.N. Resolution 2758 recognizing the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the only legitimate representative of China to the global body. The ROC withdraws from the U.N.
- 
- 1979** Democracy activists demonstrating in Kaohsiung are arrested and imprisoned following what is known as the Kaohsiung Incident, which eventually leads to the formation and development of the Democratic Progressive Party in 1986.
- 
- 1987** Martial law, in effect since 1949, ends and bans on the formation of new political parties and news publications are lifted. Democratization goes into high gear.
- Cross-strait people-to-people exchanges begin.
- 
- 1991** The Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion are abolished. A complete re-election of all Congressional representatives, including members of the Legislature and National Assembly, takes place from 1991 to 1992, giving the people of Taiwan full representation. From 1991 through 2005, the ROC Constitution undergoes seven rounds of revision.

Taiwan becomes a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

- 
- 1992** Government-authorized representatives from across the Taiwan Strait meet for the first time in Hong Kong, and via subsequent communication and negotiations arrive at various joint acknowledgements and understandings.
- 
- 1995** The National Health Insurance program begins.
- 
- 1996** The ROC holds its first-ever direct presidential election, with the KMT's Lee Teng-hui and running mate Lien Chan garnering 54 percent of the vote.
- 
- 2000** Chen Shui-bian and Annette Hsiu-lien Lu of the DPP are elected president and vice president, ending the KMT's more than 50-year rule and marking the first transfer of ROC government executive power in Taiwan between political parties.
- 
- 2002** Taiwan becomes a member of the World Trade Organization.
- 
- 2003** The Legislative Yuan passes the Referendum Act, providing a legal basis for citizens to vote directly on issues of local or national importance.
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**2004** The first national referendum is held in conjunction with the third direct presidential election, in which Chen and Lu are re-elected with a slight majority.

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**2005** The Legislative Yuan passes a constitutional amendment package, halving the number of its seats from 225 to 113 and introducing the single-district, two-votes system for legislative elections.

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**2008** Ma Ying-jeou and Vincent C. Siew of the KMT are elected president and vice president of the ROC, garnering 58 percent of the vote and marking the second transfer of ROC government executive power in Taiwan between political parties.

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**2009** Taiwan attends the World Health Assembly as an observer, marking its first participation in an activity of the U.N. since its withdrawal in 1971.

President Ma signs the instruments of ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

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**2010** The ROC inks the Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) with China to institutionalize economic and trade relations across the Taiwan Strait.

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**2011** The centennial of the ROC is celebrated in Taiwan.

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**2012** Incumbent Ma Ying-jeou and his new running mate Wu Den-yih, representing the KMT, win the election for president and vice president with 51.6 percent of the vote.

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**2013** Taiwan signs an agreement on economic cooperation with New Zealand and an agreement on economic partnership with Singapore.

Taiwan attends the 38th session of the International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly as the guest of the council's president.

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**2014** Mainland Affairs Council Minister Wang Yu-chi holds a formal meeting with China's Taiwan Affairs Office director Zhang Zhijun in Nanjing in February, marking the first official contact between the heads of the respective government agencies responsible for cross-strait relations.

Sunflower Movement protesters occupy the Legislature to oppose the passing of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement, preventing its passage.

A record 11,130 candidates are elected nationwide for nine categories of local government representatives in what are known as the "nine-in-one" local elections.

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**2015** President Ma and Chinese leader Xi Jinping meet in Singapore in November, marking the first top-level meeting between the two sides in 66 years.

Taiwan signs the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement and submits its instrument of acceptance to the organization.

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**2016** DPP Chairperson Tsai Ing-wen and academic Chen Chien-jen are elected president and vice president of the ROC.

The DPP gains its first legislative majority after securing 68 of the 113 seats.

President Tsai Ing-wen officially apologizes on behalf of the government to the nation's indigenous peoples for the pain and mistreatment they endured for centuries.

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**2017** The Indigenous Languages Development Act is enacted to preserve and promote the native tongues of Taiwan's 16 officially recognized indigenous tribes.

Taiwan hosts the Taipei 2017 Summer Universiade.

Formosat-5, the nation's first homegrown ultra-high resolution Earth observation satellite, is launched.

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**2018** Taiwan's Transitional Justice Commission is inaugurated May 31. President Tsai issues an apology to victims of political persecution during the country's White Terror period from 1949 to 1991 following the commission's decision to expunge their criminal records.

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**2019** A special law legalizing same-sex marriage is passed, making Taiwan the first country in Asia to allow LGBT unions.

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**2020** Tsai Ing-wen and running mate Lai Ching-te of the ruling DPP party win the 2020 presidential election with 57.1 percent of the vote. The DPP retains its legislative majority.

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# POLITICAL SYSTEM

## FACT FOCUS

The ROC president and vice president are directly elected every four years.

In Taiwan's legislative elections, each voter casts one ballot for their district and another for at-large seats.

The ROC Constitution, promulgated Jan. 1, 1947, did not begin to serve its intended purpose as the foundation for democratic governance and rule of law until after 1987, when martial law was lifted in Taiwan. Since then, it has undergone seven rounds of revision in 1991, 1992, 1994, 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2005 to make it more relevant to the country's current condition.

One of the important consequences of these amendments is that since 1991, the government has acknowledged that its jurisdiction extends only to the areas it controls. The president and legislators, therefore, are elected by and accountable to the people of those areas only.



President Tsai Ing-wen of the Democratic Progressive Party, sixth left, celebrates her re-election alongside running mate Lai Ching-te, fifth left, following Taiwan's 2020 presidential election. (Chin Hung-hao)

In accordance with constitutional amendments promulgated in June 2005, the number of seats in the Legislative Yuan was halved from 225 to 113 and legislators' terms were increased from three to four years. Under the new legislative election system, each electoral district elects just one seat. Each voter casts two ballots—one for the district and the other for at-large seats. The power to ratify constitutional amendments is now exercised by citizens through referendums.

## Levels of Government

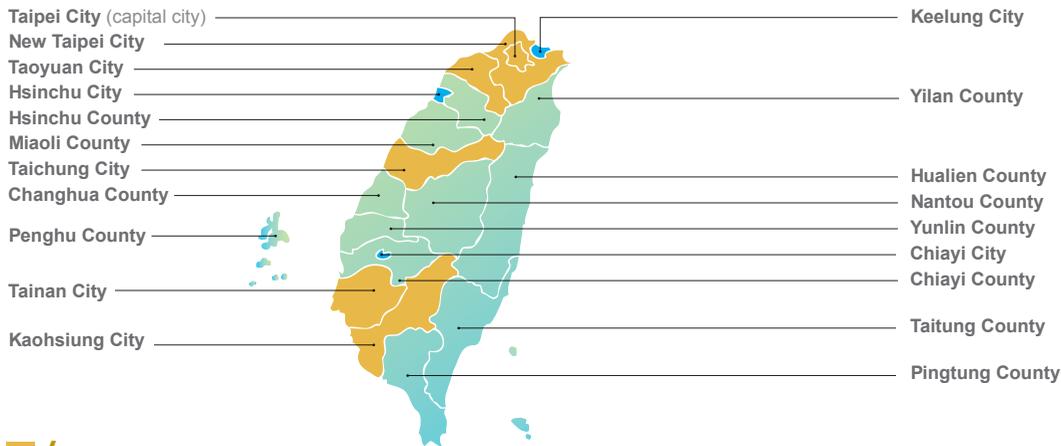
The central government comprises the presidency and five major branches, or yuans. The local governments at present include those of six special municipalities, 13 counties and three autonomous municipalities with the same hierarchical status as counties. Beginning in 2014, all heads and representatives of local governments are popularly elected simultaneously in cities and counties across Taiwan every four years. In addition, there are 198 county-administered townships and cities, as well as 170 districts—including six indigenous mountain districts—in autonomous and special municipalities.

Special municipalities are top-level administrative entities that fall under the direct jurisdiction of the central government. They play an important role in leading regional development. This status gives access to

## FIVE BRANCHES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT



## LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS



**6** Special municipalities

**3** Autonomous municipalities

**13** Counties

Lienchiang County



Kinmen County



greater funding and the opportunity to set up additional agencies and employ more civil servants. The six special municipalities are, in order of population, New Taipei, Taichung, Kaohsiung, Taipei, Taoyuan and Tainan cities.

### Presidency and Premiership

The president and vice president are directly elected, serve terms of four years and may be re-elected for one additional term. The president is head of state and commander in chief of the armed forces, represents the nation in foreign relations and is empowered to appoint

heads of four branches of the government, including the premier, who leads the Executive Yuan, or Cabinet, and must report regularly to the Legislative Yuan, or Legislature. The heads of ministries, commissions and agencies under the Executive Yuan are appointed by the premier and form the Executive Yuan Council. To improve administrative effectiveness, the Executive Yuan is undergoing restructuring to reduce the number of Cabinet-level organizations from 37 to 29.

After the reorganization, which commenced at the start of 2012, the Executive Yuan will consist of 14 ministries, eight councils, three independent agencies and four other organizations. Under the ROC Constitution, neither the president's appointment of the premier nor the premier's appointment of ministers is subject to legislative confirmation.

Presidential appointment of the members of the Control Yuan and the Examination Yuan, as well as justices of the Judicial Yuan, must be confirmed by the Legislature. Lawmakers elect the president of the Legislature, or speaker, from among their ranks.

## Political Parties

Given the key role of the presidency in the overall functioning of the government, the term "ruling party"

denotes which political party occupies the Presidential Office. The Kuomintang held the presidency in Taiwan for more than five decades before the Democratic Progressive Party won the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. The KMT returned to power in 2008 and in 2012. The DPP won the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections, marking the third transition of power since the country's democratization.

In the January 2020 legislative elections, the DPP gained 54 percent of the seats in the Legislature, while the KMT secured 34 percent. Other major parties that have a presence in the Legislature include the Taiwan People's Party, the New Power Party and the Taiwan Statebuilding Party.

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

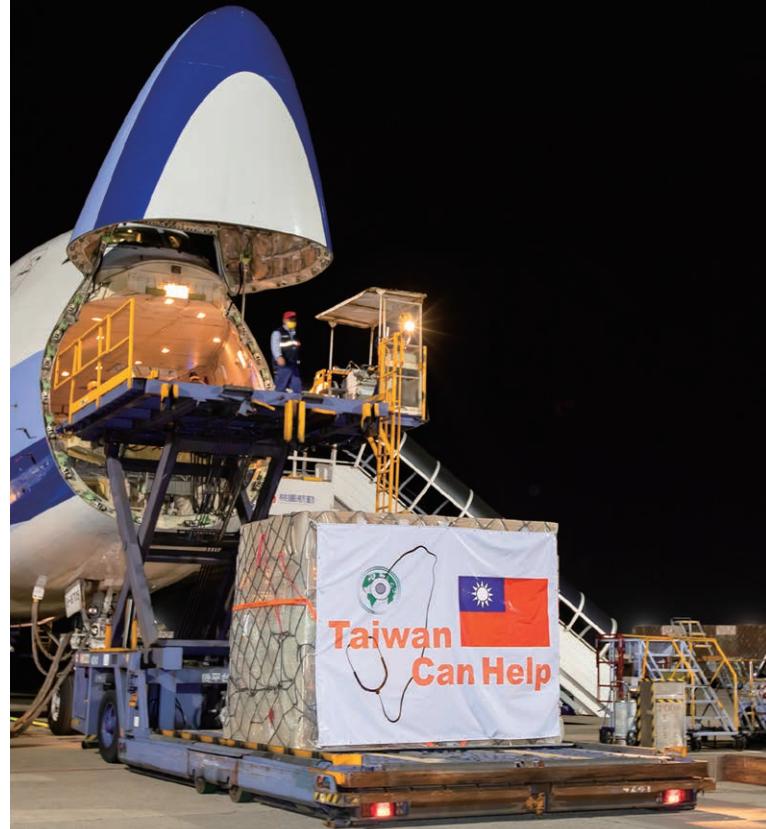
## FACT FOCUS

**A total of 170 countries and territories accord visa-free, landing visa or e-visa privileges to Republic of China (Taiwan) passport holders.**

**Taiwan is the only nation included in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program that does not maintain formal diplomatic relations with the United States.**

The ROC is a sovereign and independent state that maintains its own national defense and conducts its own foreign affairs. As enshrined in the ROC Constitution, the country aims to “cultivate good-neighborliness with other nations, and respect treaties and the Charter of the U.N. ... promote international cooperation, protect international justice and ensure world peace.” The ultimate goal of the country’s foreign policy is to ensure a favorable environment for the nation’s preservation and long-term development.

The government is committed to its approach of steadfast diplomacy, which aims to advance mutual assistance



A box of medical supplies stands ready to be loaded onto a flight bound for Taiwan’s allies and like-minded partners during the coronavirus pandemic. (Chen Mei-ling)

for mutual benefits. The policy is also defined as firm in purpose and is targeted at building robust relationships with diplomatic allies and countries that share the common values of freedom and democracy. Under this approach, the focus of the country's diplomatic work is shifting from the one-way provision of foreign aid to two-way dialogue, with bilateral cooperation projects taking into consideration the development of both industries and markets.

Under President Tsai Ing-wen's New Southbound Policy, Taiwan is also striving to broaden exchanges with the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand on economic and trade cooperation, talent cultivation, resource sharing and regional links. The long-term goal is to create a new type of cooperation based on shared benefits.

The ROC has diplomatic relations with 15 countries and substantive ties with many others such as Australia, Canada, EU nations, Japan, New Zealand and the U.S. President Tsai visited diplomatic ally the Kingdom of Eswatini from April 17-21, 2018, for celebrations marking 50 years of independence for the African nation, the 50th birthday of H.M. King Mswati III and 50 years of bilateral ties. From Aug. 12-20 the same year, President

## NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY



Tsai traveled to allies Paraguay and Belize in South and Central America, respectively. During this trip, she attended the inauguration of Paraguay President Mario Abdo Benitez and held bilateral talks with the heads of state of these countries.

From March 21-28, 2019, the president went on her Oceans of Democracy visit to Palau, Nauru and the Marshall Islands. This followed on from her first trip

to the Pacific in October 2017 to the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. President Tsai visited Taiwan's Caribbean allies Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and St. Lucia on her Journey of Freedom, Democracy, Sustainability from July 11-22. The presidential visit also included U.S. stopovers in New York and Denver.

## International Participation

Taiwan has full membership in 38 intergovernmental organizations and their subsidiary bodies, including the World Trade Organization, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Asian Development Bank and Central American Bank for Economic Integration. It also enjoys observer or other statuses in 20 IGOs and their subsidiary bodies, including the Inter-American Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and committees of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Taiwan will, while upholding national sovereignty and dignity and advancing the welfare of the people, engage with the international community pragmatically and professionally to contribute wherever possible. It will also continue to seek participation in intergovernmental organizations and mechanisms such as the World Health

Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization, U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and International Criminal Police Organization to safeguard the people's welfare and contribute to the advancement of humanity. These efforts have won the staunch support of diplomatic allies and like-minded countries.

As of April 22, 2020, 170 countries and territories have accorded visa-free, landing visa or e-visa privileges to ROC (Taiwan) passport holders. Taiwan has also inked working holiday agreements with 17 countries.

## Strong Relations

Notably, among the 38 countries included in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program, Taiwan is the only one that does not maintain formal diplomatic relations with the United States, highlighting the otherwise close relationship between the two sides. The Taiwan Relations Act, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1979, has continued to provide a strong foundation for Taiwan-U.S. cooperation in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. The U.S. has repeatedly reiterated its security commitments to Taiwan under the TRA and the Six Assurances. In 2018, the Taiwan Travel Act was passed unanimously by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by U.S. President Donald J. Trump. This legislation encourages visits by officials at all levels

from the two sides, underscoring the strong support for Taiwan from the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government. In 2020, the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative Act (TAIPEI Act) was also passed by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Trump, expressing U.S. support for Taiwan's diplomatic alliances around the world and Taiwan's participation in international organizations. As Taiwan and the U.S. continue to expand the breadth of their cooperation, their bilateral partnership has grown into one of global cooperation.

The ROC and the Holy See have long-standing diplomatic relations and possess a shared commitment to religious freedom and humanitarian relief. Acting in line with the universal values of peace, freedom, democracy and respect for human rights, Taiwan will continue to be an indispensable partner to the Holy See and other countries in their efforts to promote love, charity and world peace.

Likewise, sharing common values such as democracy, freedom, human rights and the rule of law, Taiwan and the EU, together with other European countries, have developed close cooperation and exchanges across numerous fields. For instance, Taiwan and the

EU enjoy strong economic and trade ties, with the EU being Taiwan's fifth-largest trading partner and largest source of foreign direct investment, and the two sides are increasing cooperation in up-and-coming sectors such as green energy, new technologies and digital transformation. Taiwan and the EU are also expanding cooperation in the field of human rights. Through the annual Taiwan-EU Human Rights Consultations, both sides are working together on topics of mutual concern and interest, including gender equality, LGBTI rights and migrant worker rights.

On April 10, 2013, Taiwan signed a fisheries agreement with Japan after 17 rounds of negotiations since 1996, expanding the fishing grounds of Taiwan vessels in waters surrounding the Diaoyutai Islands in the East China Sea. Strong ties between the two sides are underscored by the renaming of Japan's representative office in Taiwan from the Interchange Association, Japan to the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association in January 2017, as well as Taiwan's Association of East Asian Relations to the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association in May 2017.

Taiwan and Japan held their fourth annual meeting on maritime affairs in Taipei Dec. 2, 2019. Staged in accordance with a marine cooperation dialogue mechanism

established in 2016, the forum explored opportunities for collaboration across a wide range of areas such as fisheries and research.

In November 2015, Taiwan and the Philippines concluded the Agreement Concerning the Facilitation of Cooperation on Law Enforcement in Fisheries Matters to safeguard the security of fishermen from both sides.

On July 19, 2016, President Tsai put forth four principles and five actions pertaining to issues in the South China Sea. The four principles are: Firstly, disputes in the South China Sea should be settled peacefully in accordance with international law and the law of the sea, including the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. Secondly, Taiwan should be included in multilateral mechanisms aimed at resolving disputes. Thirdly, states concerned have an obligation to safeguard freedom of navigation and overflight in the region. Lastly, disputes should be resolved by setting aside differences and promoting joint development. Through negotiations conducted on the basis of equality, Taiwan is willing to work with all states concerned to advance peace and stability in the South China Sea, and to jointly conserve and develop resources in the region. The five actions include safeguarding the country's fishing rights, participating in

multilateral consultations, promoting scientific cooperation and nurturing experts in the law of the sea.

The government is working to transform Taiping Island in the Nansha (Spratly) Islands into a base for humanitarian aid and supplies in the South China Sea. Since assuming responsibility in 2000 for maintaining the government's presence on Taiping Island as well as the Tungsha (Pratas) Islands, the Coast Guard Administration under the Cabinet-level Ocean Affairs Council has continued to carry out disaster response and humanitarian aid missions and assisted individuals from home and abroad. The CGA is committed to deepening collaboration with its counterparts from neighboring countries in line with the government's policy of working with all relevant parties to advance peace and stability in the South China Sea.

With an area of 0.51 square kilometers, Taiping Island can sustain human habitation and an economic life of its own. It also meets the criteria of an island as defined in Article 121 of the UNCLOS, affording the ROC full rights associated with territorial waters, a contiguous zone, a 200-nautical-mile exclusive economic zone and a continental shelf under UNCLOS.

## Win-Win Cooperation

As a model citizen in global society, Taiwan will continue to promote humanitarian aid and disease control while actively participating in international efforts to tackle climate change, terrorism and transnational crime. Going forward, the nation will build lasting partnerships with allied and like-minded countries through fostering governmental interactions, business investments and people-to-people exchanges, and work with its partners around the world to uphold and promote the universal values of peace, freedom, democracy and human rights.

Taiwan's reaction to the coronavirus pandemic, featuring mandatory quarantines, high-tech contact tracing and transparent sharing of information, is now known globally as the Taiwan Model. Its success has opened the door for the country to collaborate closely with natural allies on coronavirus vaccine development and studies through Academia Sinica—the country's foremost research institution—and share surgical masks, forehead thermometers, gloves, goggles, gowns, rapid testing kits and other equipment. Agreements with nations the world over regarding donations and exchanges of such essential medical items have

generated widespread media coverage, winning the country even more friends abroad.

Changes in society, economic liberalization and democratic transformation in Taiwan have created a fertile environment for the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations have flourished. Civil society today plays a key role in ensuring good governance and enabling Taiwan to exert its soft power in the international arena. NGOs have raised Taiwan's profile by engaging in various international cooperation projects closely aligned with the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.

# CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

## FACT FOCUS

**In December 1987 Taiwan lifted the ban on travel to China for those with close relatives there.**

**The full relaxation of restrictions on Taiwan travelers visiting China came into effect in December 2008 with the opening of direct flights.**

Since the government relocated to Taiwan in 1949, it has exercised jurisdiction over Taiwan proper, Penghu Islands, Kinmen Islands, Matsu Islands and a number of smaller islands, while China has been under the control of the authorities in Beijing. Beginning with the acceleration of Taiwan's democratization in the late 1980s, many restrictions concerning civil exchanges with China have been lifted. Today, Taiwan is one of the biggest investors in China. Between 1991 and the end of March 2020, approved investment in China comprised 44,056 cases totaling US\$188.5 billion. In 2019, the value of cross-strait trade was US\$149.2 billion. In that year, travelers from China made 2.68 million visits to Taiwan.



A flight operated by China-based Shanghai Airlines approaches the runway at Taipei Songshan Airport, one of many regularly scheduled cross-strait flights flown since 2009. (Chin Hung-hao)



Source: Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance

In June 2008, institutionalized talks between Taiwan's semiofficial Straits Exchange Foundation and China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits resumed after a 10-year hiatus. By August 2015, 11 rounds of negotiations had been held alternately on either side of the Taiwan Strait, producing 23 formal agreements, of which 21 have come into effect, and two consensuses. Most significant among the accords is the Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) concluded in June 2010, which aims to institutionalize trade and economic relations between Taiwan and China.

## Peace and Stability

In order to promote thorough domestic reforms, the country requires a peaceful and stable external environment, especially with regard to relations with China. President Tsai Ing-wen, since taking office May 20, 2016 and following her reelection in 2020, has worked to build a consistent, predictable and sustainable cross-strait relationship based on existing realities and political foundations.

The government's unchanged position is to maintain the cross-strait status quo. This is Taiwan's commitment to the region and the world. Peace, prosperity and development in Asia are common responsibilities of all countries in the region. Therefore, cross-strait issues are connected to regional peace. Taiwan will fulfill its responsibilities of safeguarding regional security by continuing to extend goodwill and maintaining stable, consistent and predictable cross-strait relations.

In recent years, however, China has set political preconditions for cross-strait exchanges, unilaterally suspended official interactions, and continuously exerted political suppression and military coercion on Taiwan. On Jan. 2, 2019, China proposed exploration of the "one country, two systems" model for Taiwan, disrupting the

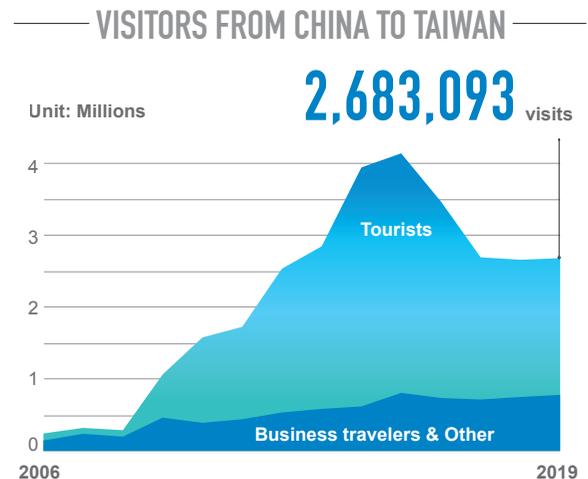
status quo of regional peace and stability. In the face of China's increasingly aggressive political agenda, President Tsai put forth guidelines March 11, 2019, aimed at strengthening national security measures, safeguarding national sovereignty and ensuring current and future generations have the right to decide Taiwan's future. The Legislature also passed the Anti-Infiltration Act, which took effect on Jan. 15, 2020, to prevent interference in the country's political processes by external hostile forces.

Furthermore, the government has actively pushed for amendments to the Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area. Those passed to date have established a democratic oversight mechanism for cross-strait political agreements under Article 5-3; enhanced management of civil servants' trips to China under Articles 9, 9-3 and 91; and adjusted fines for unauthorized Chinese investment to reflect the severity of violations under Article 93-1.

### Consistent Approach

The government will continue to address cross-strait ties based on the ROC Constitution, the Act Governing Relations Between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area, and the will of the people.

In addition, the government calls upon the authorities in China to face up to the reality that the ROC exists and that the people of Taiwan have an unshakable faith in the democratic system. China is encouraged to embrace President Tsai's call for "peace, parity, democracy and dialogue," thus fostering positive interactions that truly serve the well-being of people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Lastly, the government will continue deepening cooperation with the U.S., Japan and other like-minded countries to counter China's threats to Taiwan, promote regional peace, stability and prosperity, and protect the nation's interests.



Source: National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior

# ECONOMY

## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan was the world's 17th largest exporter of merchandise in 2019.**

**Under the New Southbound Policy, Taiwan is deepening ties across the board with the 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand.**

Taiwan holds an important position in the global economy. It is a top player in the world's information and communication technology industry as well as a major supplier of goods across the industrial spectrum.

According to the World Trade Organization, Taiwan was the 17th largest exporter and 17th largest importer of merchandise in 2019. It was also one of the largest holders of foreign exchange reserves as of December 2019. Taiwan's gross domestic product per capita reached US\$25,909 in 2019. In terms of nominal GDP, Taiwan ranks close to Switzerland and Poland, while its GDP per capita expressed as purchasing power parity



Indian students studying at WuFeng University in southern Taiwan's Chiayi County intern at a factory operated by Chiayi City-headquartered Far East Machinery Co. (Chin Hung-hao)

is similar to that of Sweden and Denmark and higher than that of Japan and South Korea.

### Trade Growth

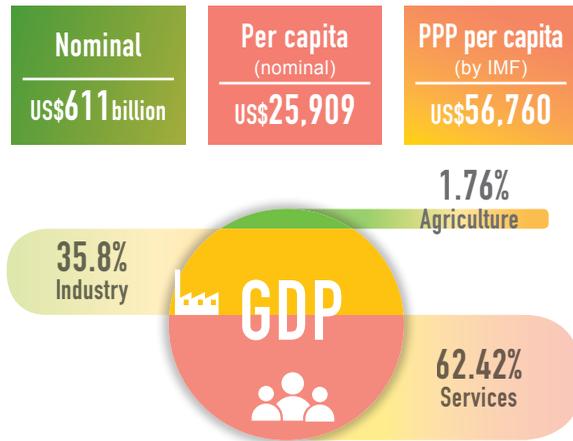
After weathering the global financial crisis of 2009, Taiwan’s export-oriented economy took another hit in 2015, mainly due to the weak global demand for consumer electronics products, coupled with the falling price of crude oil. Taiwan’s economy grew only 1.47 percent and its overall trade volume decreased by 13.3 percent in 2015. The situation has improved since 2016, and statistics indicate that although in 2019 Taiwan’s overall

exports decreased by 1.44 percent, imports increased by 0.32 percent, and its economy expanded 2.71 percent. While growth was modest due to the impact of the U.S.-China trade dispute, expanding domestic production driven by the reshoring of manufacturing companies helped to offset the drag. Growth had rebounded by January and February of 2020, with exports and imports respectively increasing by 6.4 percent and 5.3 percent and overall trade value rising 5.9 percent year on year.

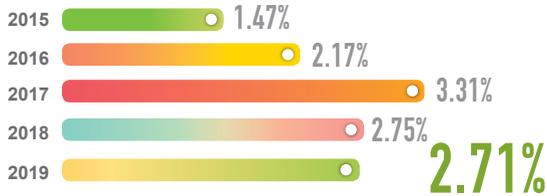
Annual surveys of the world’s economies, including those conducted by the World Economic Forum, Business Environment Risk Intelligence and the Economist Intelligence Unit, have ranked Taiwan among the top nations year after year with respect to long-term growth and technological development. Results announced in 2019-2020 were no exception (see table “Global Survey Rankings” p. 58-59).

In July 2013, Taiwan signed an economic cooperation agreement with New Zealand, its first with a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. An economic partnership accord was also inked with Singapore in November the same year, marking Taiwan’s first such pact with a trading partner in Southeast Asia. Both agreements go beyond WTO requirements.

### GDP SNAPSHOT (2019)



## ECONOMIC GROWTH RATES



Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics

Taiwan has also completed research with Indonesia and India on the feasibility of an economic cooperation agreement, with the results released in Jakarta in December 2012 and in New Delhi in September 2013, respectively. Developments such as the economic pacts with New Zealand and Singapore as well as the ECAs are expected to facilitate the country's participation in such regional economic integration blocs as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

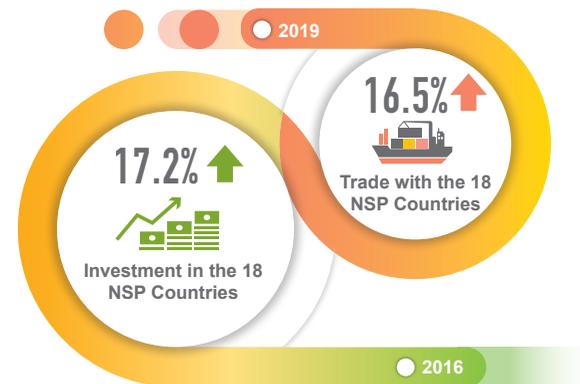
### Development Approaches

Since May 2016, Taiwan has adopted the New Model for Economic Development. This seeks to boost growth by promoting innovation, increasing employment and ensuring the equitable distribution of economic benefits.

Under the model, Taiwan is striving to strengthen global and regional connections through initiatives such as the New Southbound Policy, which aims to diversify the nation's international markets by expanding links with ASEAN member states, as well as South Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Taiwan will continue monitoring the development of regional economic integration and seek all possible opportunities for participation.

To boost domestic investment and enhance the nation's global competitiveness, the New Model for Economic Development prioritizes the promotion of the 5+2 Industrial Innovation Plan. These are the five emerging

## NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY TRACKER



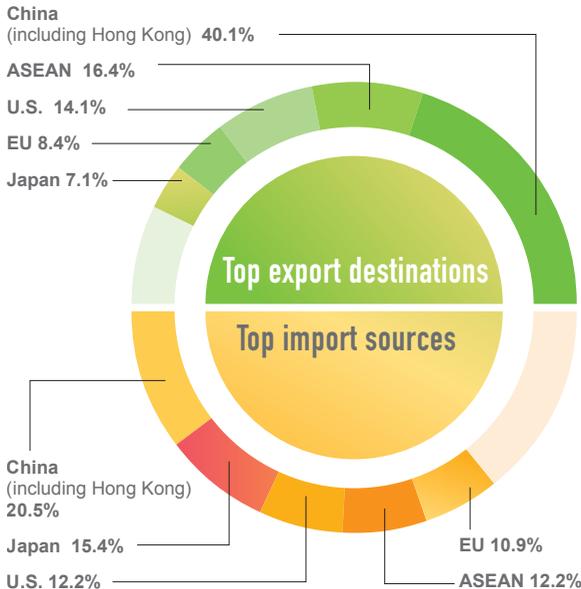
## TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROFILE (2019)

Total trade volume: **US\$614.9 billion**

Exports: **US\$329.2 billion**

Imports: **US\$285.7 billion**

Trade balance: **US\$43.5 billion surplus**



Foreign exchange reserves: **US\$478.1 billion**

(As of December 2019)

Registered outward investment: **US\$6.85 billion**

• Top five destinations

British territories in the Caribbean	US\$1.31 billion
Vietnam	US\$915 million
Singapore	US\$636 million
Luxembourg	US\$604 million
U.S.	US\$561 million

Registered inward investment: **US\$11.2 billion**

• Top five sources

British Territories in the Caribbean	US\$3.12 billion
The Netherlands	US\$2.29 billion
Japan	US\$1.27 billion
Australia	US\$714 million
Hong Kong	US\$647 million

and high-growth sectors of biotech and pharmaceuticals, green energy, national defense, smart machinery and Internet of Things, as well as two core concepts: the circular economy and a new paradigm for agricultural development. Also comprising the Asia Silicon Valley development plan in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City, the initiative seeks to cultivate core drivers of future growth.

The government is also promoting the Forward-looking Infrastructure Development Program to meet national infrastructure needs over the next 30 years. This program contains eight major elements: railway development, digital infrastructure, aquatic environments, food safety, green energy, urban-rural development, boosting birthrates and child care facilities, and nurturing talent and employment.

As it works to advance innovative industries, the government is also committed to protecting the environment. With this in mind, the new economic model seeks to fully integrate industrial restructuring, national land-

use planning and regional growth strategies to foster sustainable development while promoting the use of green energy resources.

Under this approach, the government aims to raise wage levels and enhance regional development while mitigating the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the prolonged U.S.-China trade war. Measures are expected to improve industrial competitiveness and further bolster Taiwan's economy in 2020.

## GLOBAL SURVEY RANKINGS

Topic of Survey (Date of Publication)	Rank	Countries Surveyed	Surveying Institution
<b>World Competitiveness Scoreboard</b> (May 2019)	16	63	International Institute for Management Development
<b>Investment climate</b> (December 2019)	4	50	Business Environment Risk Intelligence
<b>Networked Readiness Index 2019</b> (December 2019 )	26	122	Portulans Institute
<b>Index of Economic Freedom</b> (March 2020 )	11	180	Heritage Foundation & The Wall Street Journal
<b>Ease of Doing Business</b> (October 2019)	15	190	World Bank
<b>Global Competitiveness Index 2019</b> (October 2019)	12	141	World Economic Forum

# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

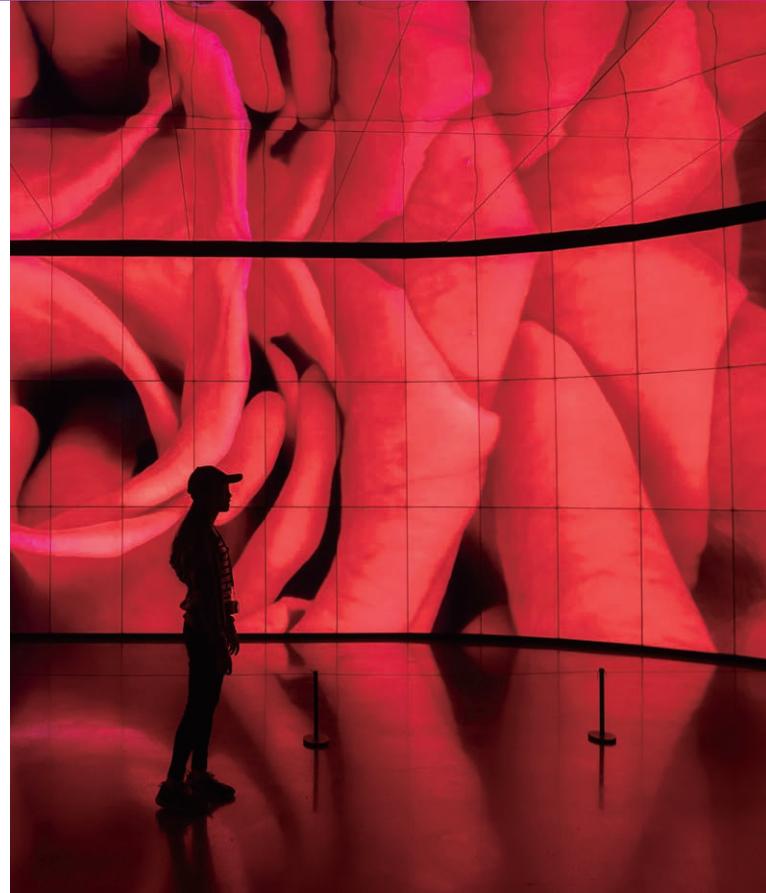
## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan is one of the world's leading producers of information and communication technology products.**

**World Economic Forum ranks Taiwan 12th out of 141 economies in the Global Competitiveness Report released in October 2019.**

In April 2014, the National Science Council—the government's dedicated agency charged with advancing science and technology development, supporting academic research and promoting the nation's three science parks—was reorganized and renamed as the Ministry of Science and Technology. While continuing its predecessor's innovative measures and programs, the MOST, with a new organizational structure, aims to focus academic research on the needs of industry as Taiwan relies on science and technology innovation as a key driver of economic growth and national progress.

The success of Taiwan's high-tech enterprises is largely attributable to the government's generous funding



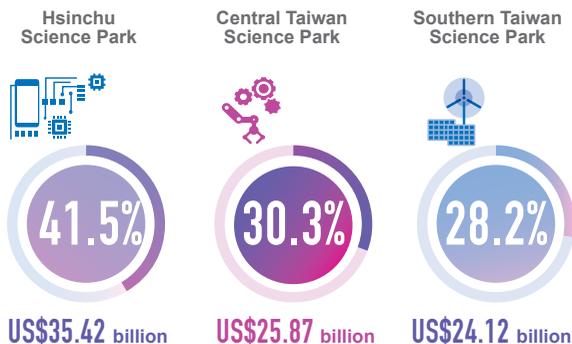
A visitor marvels at high-resolution images of flowers at the Taichung World Flora Exposition in the central Taiwan metropolis. (Chin Hung-hao)

of applied scientific development. With government support, the Industrial Technology Research Institute, National Applied Research Laboratories and Institute for Information Industry all played important roles in jump-starting the nation's rise as a technological powerhouse by conducting research, aiding the private sector with R&D and exploring new technologies.

## Supporting Innovation

ITRI's innovative prowess is best illustrated by the fact that in the past 12 years it has won a total of 41 highly

## TURNOVER OF FIRMS IN TAIWAN'S THREE MAJOR SCIENCE PARKS (2019)



Source: Ministry of Science and Technology

## PRODUCTION VALUE & GLOBAL SHARE OF TAIWAN-MADE PRODUCTS & SERVICES (2019)

### No. 1 Worldwide

Category	Production Value (US\$ million)	Quantity	Global Share (%)
Custom IC fabrication	40,352		71.43
IC testing & packaging	13,973		48.7
Chlorella		903 tons	45.12
High-end bicycles		1,979,000	28.6
Silicon wafer	2,312		20.96

### No. 2 Worldwide

Portable navigation devices	576		41.71
IC substrates	2,425		23.3
Small & medium-sized TFT-LCD panels	7,562		20.17
IC design	22,072		18.74
Electro-deposited copper foil		73.78 million square meters	14.8
Printed circuit boards	7,493		10.97

Source: Industry & Technology Intelligence Services Project, Ministry of Economic Affairs

## GLOBAL SURVEY RANKINGS

Topic of Survey (Date of Publication)	Rank (category)	Countries Surveyed	Surveying Institution
<b>Global Competitiveness Report 2019</b> (October 2019)	4 (innovation capability)	141	World Economic Forum
<b>2019 World Competitiveness</b> (May 2019)	13 (technological infrastructure) 8 (scientific infrastructure)	63	International Institute for Management Development

prestigious R&D 100 Awards given out by U.S.-based R&D Magazine, in addition to being named a Derwent Top 100 Global Innovator for the third consecutive year. The institute has been instrumental in establishing several companies that have gone on to command prominent positions in the global marketplace, including Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. and United Microelectronics Corp., which are among the world's top custom integrated circuit chipmakers.

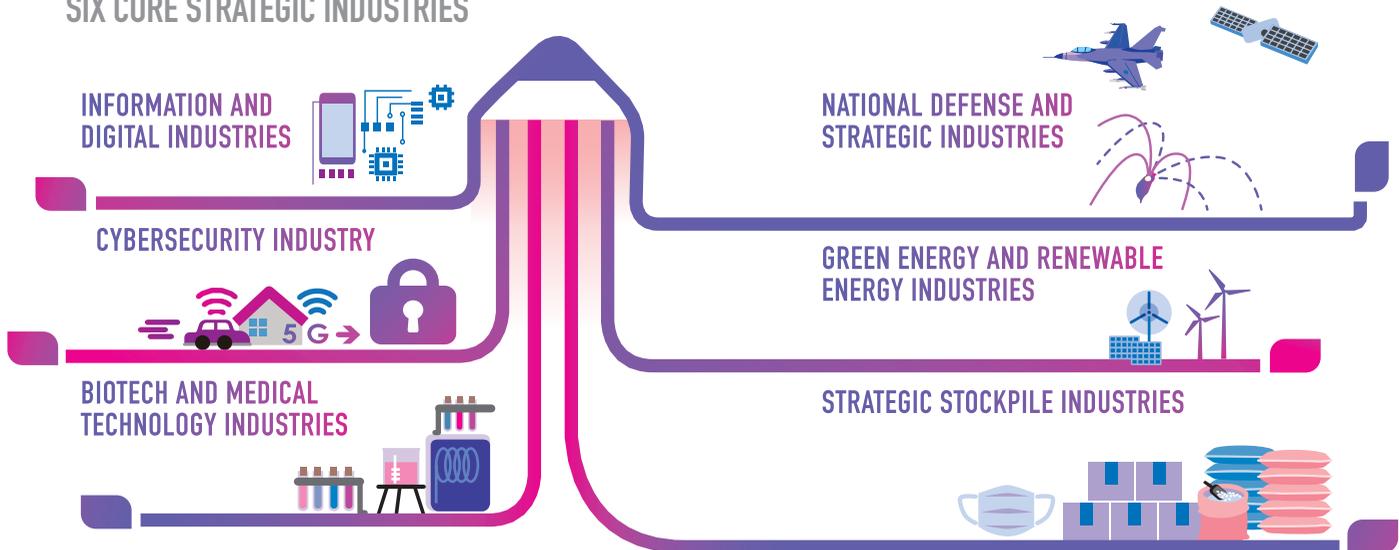
Hosting eight national research centers covering four major areas of earth and environment, information and communication technology, biomedical technology and technology policies, NARLabs' mission is to establish R&D platforms, support academic research, promote frontier science and technology and foster the development of high-tech manpower. NARLabs' FORMOSAT-5 satellite has provided remote sensing images to 35 disaster relief operations at home and abroad since its launch in 2017, highlighting the organization's goal of achieving

global excellence with a local impact. Its research outcomes have additionally received six Outstanding S&T Contribution Awards from the Executive Yuan in recognition of major contributions to society.

The goal of III is to boost Taiwan's global competitiveness by providing a platform for digital transformation. The institute conducts R&D on innovative ICT products and applications. It also plays a key role in advancing ICT development in the public and private sectors by serving as a think tank on related policymaking and promoting talent cultivation. Over the past three decades, more than 480,000 professionals have received training through III.

Taiwan's tech ecosystem provides an ideal environment for global investors looking to establish a presence in Asia. Local venture capitalists, engineering service providers and technology developers have extensive experience collaborating on cutting-edge R&D. This is

## PRESIDENT TSAI ING-WEN'S SIX CORE STRATEGIC INDUSTRIES



on display at Taiwan Tech Arena, a new hub for innovation and startups that is attracting young entrepreneurs from around the world. Bringing together accelerators, venture capital firms and enterprises, TTA is a platform for global exchanges and talent incubation. An estimated 100 startups are expected to form through the hub each year, cultivating 2,000 entrepreneurs and increasing investment.

After years of dedication by the public and private sectors toward developing technological expertise, Taiwan's science parks are now home to clusters of companies pursuing breakthroughs in fields such as biotechnology, personal computing and peripherals, integrated circuits, nanotechnology, optoelectronics, precision machinery and telecommunications.

# EDUCATION

## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan has implemented a 12-year basic education system since the 2014 school year.**

**There are 152 universities, colleges and junior colleges in Taiwan.**

Education is an important component of government policymaking and accounts for a large portion of the budget. With an increasing emphasis on attaining tertiary education, those with a technical college or university degree account for 46.5 percent of Taiwan's population aged 15 and above, a 9.4 percentage point increase over the past decade.

To offer students more opportunities, the Ministry of Education introduced the 12-year basic education to build on the nine-year compulsory education beginning in 2014. Every year in competitions such as the International Science Olympiad, young students from



Extracurricular activities play an increasingly important role in Taiwan's education system. (Pang Chia-shan)

Taiwan win distinctions in biology, chemistry, earth sciences, mathematics, informatics and physics. The talent in Taiwan's workforce has contributed tremendously to enhancing economic prosperity and quality of life.

In 2013, the MOE assumed responsibility for the Sports Affairs Council as part of the government's efforts to better promote sport for all. Taipei hosted the 2017 Summer Universiade, one of the biggest sporting events ever staged in Taiwan.

## Scholarship Programs

Both government and university scholarships are available for international students. The Taiwan Scholarship program, for instance, offers grants to students who wish to pursue undergraduate or graduate degrees in diverse fields. Interested applicants can contact the country's embassies and representative offices or visit the MOE's website: [www.edu.tw](http://www.edu.tw).

To encourage international students to learn Mandarin in Taiwan, the MOE established the Huayu Enrichment Scholarship. This program enables foreign students to undertake Mandarin courses at affiliated language training centers around the nation, while also boosting international awareness and understanding of Taiwan culture and society.

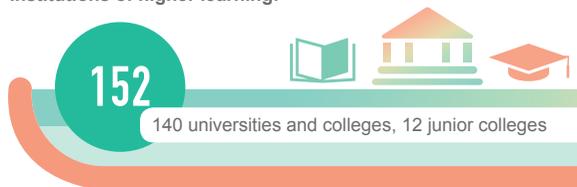
A list of Mandarin training centers and information on learning the language in Taiwan can be found on the websites of the MOE, Study in Taiwan ([www.studyintaiwan.org](http://www.studyintaiwan.org)) and the Office of Global Mandarin Education ([ogme.edu.tw](http://ogme.edu.tw)).

## SNAPSHOT

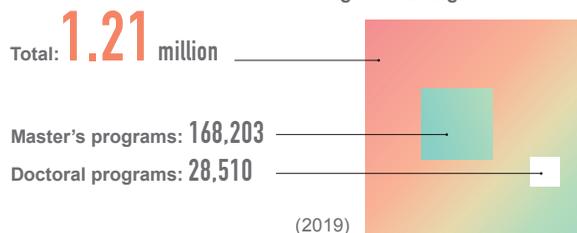
Literacy rate (15 or older): **99%**  (2019)

Outlays for education, science and culture: **20.4%** of central government budget  (2020)

Institutions of higher learning:



Students enrolled in institutions of higher learning:



# CULTURE

## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan is the center of the Mandarin pop music industry.**

**National Palace Museum in Taipei City houses one of the largest collections of ancient Chinese artifacts in the world.**

Taiwan is renowned for its fascinating blend of traditional and modern culture. To showcase the nation's history and cultural diversity, museums have been established across Taiwan, including National Palace Museum, National Taiwan Museum, National Museum of History, National Museum of Prehistory, National Museum of Taiwan Literature and National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. Taiwan also has performance venues nationwide, including National Theater and Concert Hall, National Taichung Theater, National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying) and Taiwan Traditional Theatre Center. Such high-quality facilities have made Taiwan a center for the arts in Asia, hosting



Classic decorative tiles line the walls of Xianse Temple in New Taipei City's Sanchong District. (Chen Mei-ling)

events like Taiwan International Arts Festival and Taipei Arts Festival. Traditional architecture abounds, not only in the country's magnificent monuments such as temples and official residences, but also in the many old structures that have been revitalized for use as community centers, cafes, stores and other public spaces. In fact, many aspects of traditional Chinese arts, crafts and customs are better preserved in Taiwan than anywhere else. For example, Taiwan is one of the few places still using traditional Chinese characters, and calligraphy competitions are always popular events.

Traditional tenets of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism continue to be well represented in everything from temple celebrations and literature to the visual and performing arts. In addition, visitors can learn about the heritages of the country's Hakka, Holo and indigenous peoples. Taiwan also shares its cultural riches throughout the world via programs such as the Taiwan Academy resource centers.

At the same time, Taiwan's larger cities are thriving metropolises that offer 24/7 entertainment options. There are highly regarded modern dance troupes, as well as a vibrant music scene, which is hardly surprising as Taiwan is the world capital of Mandopop, or Mandarin pop music. The local television and film

sector has seen a resurgence in recent years, while the country's booming cultural and creative industries are evident in the many designer stores, markets and exhibitions that are growing in number every year.

From literary arts and folk festivals to the lively atmosphere of night markets, Taiwan's traditions are closely intertwined with everyday life, adding to a thriving culture in which the past gives vitality and depth to the present.



Spinning tops are an important part of the local cultural heritage of Daxi District in northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City. (Huang Chung-hsin)

# MASS MEDIA

## FACT FOCUS

**Taiwan ranks second in Asia in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders. Smartphone ownership reached 95.2 percent in 2019.**

The diversity of Taiwan's media is reflected in the plethora of outlets and intense competition within the industry. The nation's press operates in a media environment that is one of the freest in Asia.

Taiwan was ranked 43rd globally and second in Asia in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index released April 21 by France-based Reporters Without Borders. In the survey of 180 countries and territories, Taiwan trailed South Korea by one place, and finished ahead of Japan, 66th; Hong Kong, 80th; Singapore, 158th; and China, 177th. Norway, Finland and Denmark topped the index, in that order.



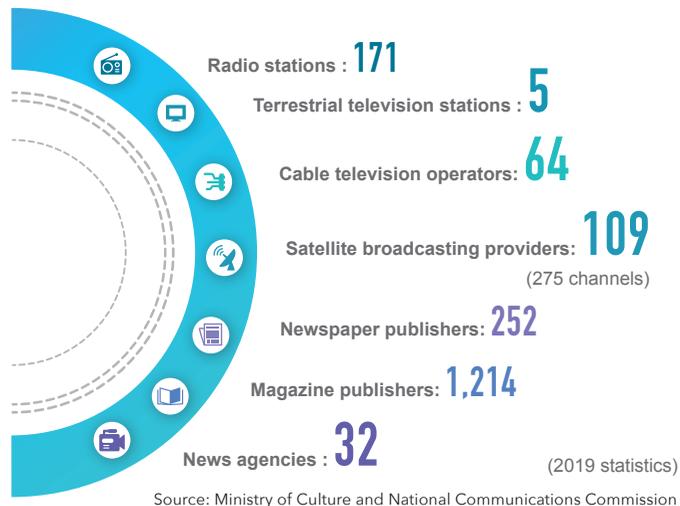
Taiwan boasts one of the freest media environments in Asia.  
(Pang Chia-shan)

Most types of media are engaged in an industrywide transition to digital forms of distribution.

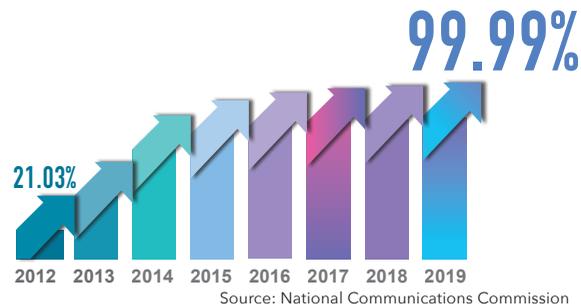
Print editions of magazines and newspapers, including the four major dailies, continue to lose ground to internet competitors. Drawing on Taiwan’s strengths in information and communication technologies, e-publishing is injecting fresh vitality into their development as well as that of the local book publishing industry, which released 41,021 new titles last year.

Digitization of cable television has not only significantly improved the visual experience of viewers, but also unleashed more innovative and diverse broadband services. With digitization virtually completed, cable television has become an important platform for various multimedia applications.

### SNAPSHOT



### DIGITAL TV HOUSEHOLD PENETRATION RATE



# VISITING TAIWAN

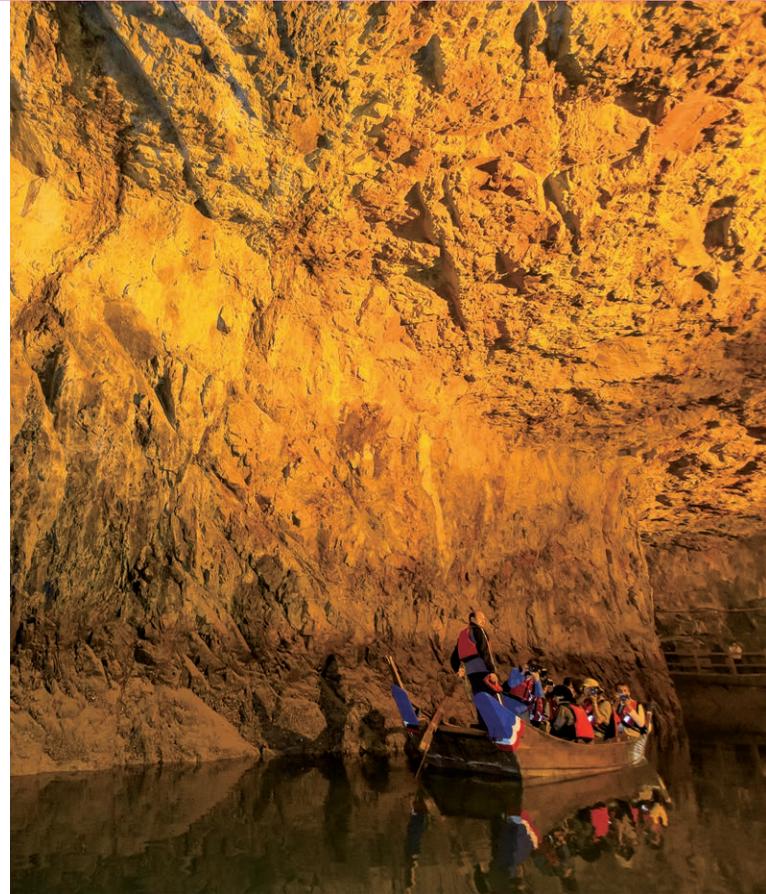
## FACT FOCUS

**Citizens of more than 60 countries and territories can enter Taiwan visa-free for 30 or 90 days.**

**Taiwan has a 24-hour multilingual travel information hotline (0800-011-765).**

With its unique fusion of cultures, breathtaking scenery, diverse cuisine, exciting city life and well-developed hospitality industry, Taiwan is an ideal destination for many types of travelers. Citizens of more than 60 countries and territories are eligible for visa-exempt entry for a period of 30 or 90 days.

In addition to about 1,100 kilometers of conventional railway lines, Taiwan has a 350-km high-speed rail system along its west coast. The high-speed trains allow travel between Taipei and Kaohsiung in 94 minutes. These two cities and the northern metropolis of Taoyuan are also equipped with state-of-the-art mass rapid transit systems.



Beihai Tunnel in outlying Lienchiang County was originally designed to shelter military landing craft but now hosts boat rides for tourists. (Chin Hung-hao)

## International Trade Shows

Throughout the year, the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) organizes shows covering the entire spectrum of industries. Major venues include the Taipei World Trade Center's Exhibition Halls No. 1 and No. 3, Nangang Exhibition Hall as well as Kaohsiung Exhibition Center in southern Taiwan. For more details, visit [www.taiwantradeshows.com.tw](http://www.taiwantradeshows.com.tw).

## General Information for Visitors

The government maintains numerous websites and hotlines to provide foreign nationals with information about traveling, living and working in Taiwan.

## Website/Hotline

Taiwan Tourism Bureau  
[www.taiwan.net.tw](http://www.taiwan.net.tw)

Travel Information Hotline  
0800-011-765 (24 hours)

National Immigration Agency  
[www.immigration.gov.tw](http://www.immigration.gov.tw)

Information for Foreigners  
Hotline 0800-024-111

## Languages

English, French, German,  
Indonesian, Japanese, Korean,  
Malaysian, Spanish, Thai,  
Vietnamese

English, Japanese, Mandarin

English, Indonesian, Khmer,  
Mandarin, Thai, Vietnamese

24 hours: English, Japanese,  
Mandarin

9:00-17:00 on weekdays:  
Vietnamese

13:00-17:00 on weekdays:  
Indonesian, Khmer, Thai

Sun Moon Lake in central Taiwan's Nantou County is a popular scenic spot. (Courtesy of Sun Moon Lake National Scenic Area Administration)

## MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

### Northern Taiwan

**National Palace Museum:** [www.npm.gov.tw](http://www.npm.gov.tw)

**Taipei 101:** [www.taipei-101.com.tw](http://www.taipei-101.com.tw)

**New Taipei City Yingge Ceramics Museum:**

[www.ceramics.ntpc.gov.tw](http://www.ceramics.ntpc.gov.tw)

**National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall:**

[www.cksmh.gov.tw](http://www.cksmh.gov.tw)

**Lungshan Temple:** [www.lungshan.org.tw](http://www.lungshan.org.tw)

**Yangmingshan National Park:** [www.ymsnp.gov.tw](http://www.ymsnp.gov.tw)

**Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area:**

[www.necoast-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.necoast-nsa.gov.tw)

**North Coast and Guanyinshan National Scenic Area:**

[www.northguan-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.northguan-nsa.gov.tw)

### Central Taiwan

**Sun Moon Lake National Scenic Area:**

[www.sunmoonlake.gov.tw](http://www.sunmoonlake.gov.tw)

**Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village:** [www.nine.com.tw](http://www.nine.com.tw)

**Tri-Mountain National Scenic Area:** [www.trimt-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.trimt-nsa.gov.tw)

**National Taiwan Craft Research and**

**Development Institute:** [www.ntcri.gov.tw](http://www.ntcri.gov.tw)

**Lukang Township:** [www.lukang.gov.tw](http://www.lukang.gov.tw)

**National Museum of Natural Science:** [www.nmns.edu.tw](http://www.nmns.edu.tw)

**Yushan (Mt. Jade) National Park:** [www.ysnp.gov.tw](http://www.ysnp.gov.tw)



### Eastern Taiwan

**Taroko National Park:** [www.taroko.gov.tw](http://www.taroko.gov.tw)

**Taiwan Forest Recreation Areas:** [recreation.forest.gov.tw](http://recreation.forest.gov.tw)

**East Coast National Scenic Area:**

[www.eastcoast-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.eastcoast-nsa.gov.tw)

**East Rift Valley National Scenic Area:** [www.erv-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.erv-nsa.gov.tw)

### Southern Taiwan

**Kenting National Park:** [www.ktnp.gov.tw](http://www.ktnp.gov.tw)

**Alishan National Scenic Area:** [www.ali-nsa.net](http://www.ali-nsa.net)

**Siraya National Scenic Area:** [www.siraya-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.siraya-nsa.gov.tw)

**Dapeng Bay National Scenic Area:** [www.dbnsa.gov.tw](http://www.dbnsa.gov.tw)

**Maolin National Scenic Area:** [www.maolin-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.maolin-nsa.gov.tw)

**Southwest Coast National Scenic Area:**

[swcoast-nsa.travel](http://swcoast-nsa.travel)

### Outlying Islands

**Kinmen National Park:** [www.kmnp.gov.tw](http://www.kmnp.gov.tw)

**Penghu National Scenic Area:** [www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw)

**Matsu National Scenic Area:** [www.matsu-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.matsu-nsa.gov.tw)

**Green Island and Orchid Island:**

[tour.taitung.gov.tw/en/discover/offshore-islands](http://tour.taitung.gov.tw/en/discover/offshore-islands)





## MAJOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS

### Month Festival / Event\*

Jan. New Year's Eve Celebrations

Feb. Taipei International  
Book Exhibition

Taiwan Lantern Festival\*\*

March Mazu International Festival  
(religious pilgrimage)

April Penghu International  
Fireworks Festival

May Lukang Dragon Boat Festival

June Xiuguluan River Rafting Triathlon

July Taiwan Culinary Exhibition

Aug. Hohaiyan Gongliao Rock Festival

Sept. Sun Moon Lake  
Swimming Carnival

Oct. Taiwan Cycling Festival

National Palace Museum Asian  
Art Festival

Nov. Taiwan Open of Surfing

Dec. Taipei Marathon

\*For more information, visit the Tourism  
Bureau's website at [eng.taiwan.net.tw](http://eng.taiwan.net.tw)

\*\*The Taiwan Lantern Festival is held in a  
different city or county each year. It will  
be held in Hsinchu City in 2021.



## Currency

New Taiwan dollar (NT\$ or TWD)  
Exchange rate: NT\$29.54 per US\$1 (June 2020)

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## Time Zone

All territories in same time zone, UTC +8 hours  
(no seasonal adjustments)

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## Credit Cards and Travelers' Checks

Major credit cards are widely accepted. Travelers' checks can be cashed at foreign exchange banks as well as many hotels and tourist-oriented stores.

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## Tipping

Tipping is not customary in Taiwan. A 10 percent service charge is often added to room rates and meals at hotels and restaurants.

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## Electricity

AC 110 V / 60 Hz

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## Visa Information

Bureau of Consular Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Phone: (+886-2) 2343-2888  
Website: [www.boca.gov.tw](http://www.boca.gov.tw)

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## Customs Regulations

Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance  
Phone: (+886-2) 2550-5500 ext. 2116  
Website: [web.customs.gov.tw](http://web.customs.gov.tw)

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