



2018-2019

TAIWAN

at a Glance

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





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 23.57 million (2017)

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



## 2018-2019 Taiwan at a Glance

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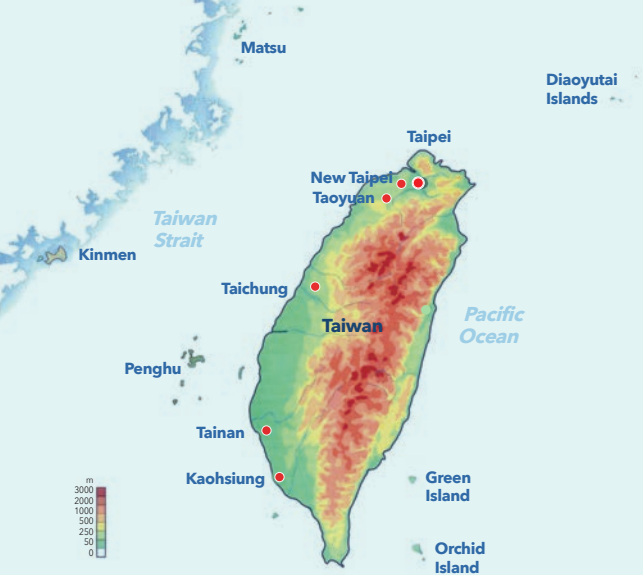
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Snow dusts  
the peak of Jade  
Mountain, or Yushan, in  
central Taiwan.  
(Courtesy of Chen Fang-yi)



# NATURAL TAIWAN

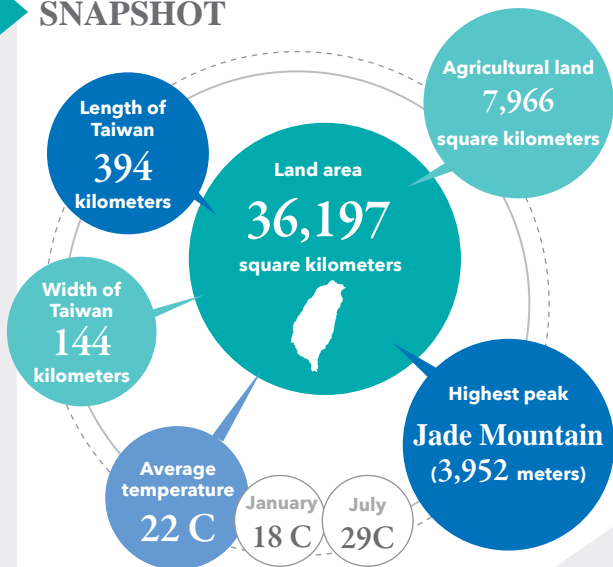
## FACT FOCUS:

**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

## SNAPSHOT



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 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 basalt pillars on the Penghu Islands and the marine hot springs along the shores of Green Island and Guishan Island.

## **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 120 species of mammals, 670 species of birds, 141



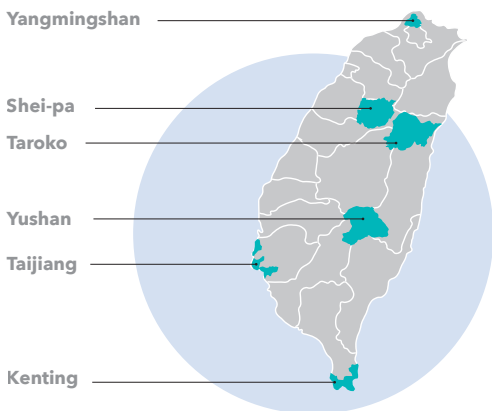
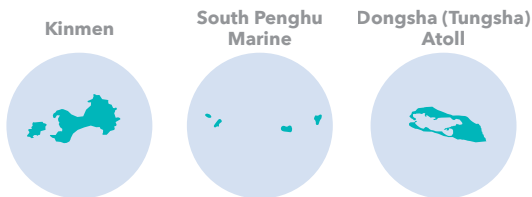
The Formosan landlocked salmon, one of the nation's best-known indigenous species, is found in the frigid mountain waters of central Taiwan.  
(Courtesy of Shei-pa National Park)

species of reptiles, 65 species of amphibians, 400 species of butterflies and 3,100 species of fish are known to inhabit Taiwan. The island's plant life comprises 674 species of ferns, 4,596 species of angiosperms and 34 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.

## NATIONAL PARKS





Students from  
Yehliu Elementary  
School take a swimming  
class on Taiwan's northern  
coast. (Chuang Kung-ju)



# PEOPLE

## FACT FOCUS:

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

**The nation is home to nearly 500,000 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 has been a melting pot not only of diverse Han subgroups, but also of indigenous Malayo-Polynesian peoples and immigrants from all over the world. Recent years, for example, have seen an influx of new arrivals from China and Southeast Asia, mostly through marriage. Currently, the number of new immigrants is nearly 500,000.

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.

# SNAPSHOT

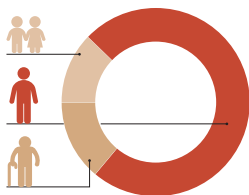
Population: **23,571,227** (2017)

Population structure :

- 0-14 years: 13.12%
- 15-64 years: 73.02%
- 65 and above: 13.86%

Ethnicity :

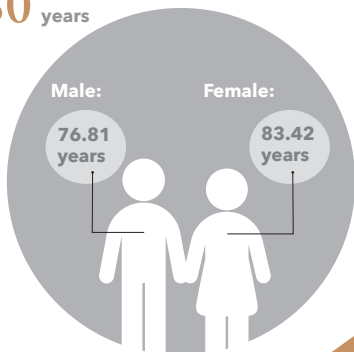
- Han Chinese: 95.5%
- Indigenous peoples: 2.4%
- New immigrants: 2.1%



Crude birth rate (2017): **8.23** (per 1,000 people)

Crude death rate (2017): **7.27** (per 1,000 people)

Life expectancy (2016): **80** years



## PRESIDENT TSAI ING-WEN'S FIVE SOCIAL STABILITY PLEDGES

### 3-in-1 Community Care

- Promote child care services in public and nonprofit facilities
- Advance community-based long-term care services for the elderly and disabled
- Create employment opportunities and promote local economies through the development of care and medical services



### Sustainable Pensions

- Organize national affairs conferences to discuss major pension systems
- Satisfy two primary requirements: namely that the basic needs of all elderly citizens are met and that pension schemes maintain a balance between income and expenditures
- Adhere to the following strategies: enact changes incrementally, streamline overly complex systems, appropriately raise the age of pension eligibility and gradually move toward a reasonable income replacement ratio



## Living at Ease

- Organize or build 200,000 social housing rental units within eight years
- Ensure that new social housing units are suitable for elderly and disabled citizens
- Promote the renovation of existing homes and communities to improve accessibility for elderly residents



## Food Safety

- Adopt stricter food safety regulations that conform to international standards, such as ISO 22000 and the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
- Establish a comprehensive tracking system for agricultural products
- Improve agricultural and food processing procedures



## Public Safety

- Prioritize anti-drug and anti-fraud programs, as well as promote women and children's safety
- Combat organized crime and the illegal use of firearms
- Build transnational information exchange mechanisms to aid law enforcement authorities at home and abroad



The stone sculptures of Sanxia Zushi Temple in New Taipei City highlight Taiwan's rich artistic and religious traditions. (Huang Chung-hsin)



# 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 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** Chinese revolutionaries overthrow the Qing  
**1912** 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..."

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**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.

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**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 communists on the northwestern coast of the island.  
Martial law is declared in Taiwan and continues to be in force until 1987.

---

**1952** 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 1951 San Francisco Treaty, Japan has renounced all rights, titles and claims to Formosa [Taiwan] and the Pescadores [the Penghu Islands] as well as the Spratly Islands and the Paracel Islands. All treaties, conventions and agreements concluded before Dec. 9, 1941, between China and Japan have 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.

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**1971** The ROC withdraws from the U.N.

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**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.

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**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.

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**1991** The Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of National Mobilization for Suppression of the Communist Rebellion are abolished. From this year through 2005, the ROC Constitution undergoes seven rounds of revision. Taiwan becomes a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

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**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.

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- 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.
- 
- 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.
- 
- 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.
- 
- 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.
-

- 
- 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.
- 
- 2010** The ROC inks the Cross-Straits Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) with China to institutionalize economic and trade relations across the Taiwan Strait.
- 
- 2011** The centennial of the ROC is celebrated in Taiwan.
- 
- 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.
- 
- 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.
- 
- 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.

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 Constitutional Court rules that provisions of the Civil Code forbidding same-sex marriage violate the Constitution, placing Taiwan on track to become the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex unions. 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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Completed in 1919, the Presidential Office Building is a major landmark in Taipei City and national-level historic structure. (Huang Chung-hsin)



# 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.

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 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.

# 2018 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## FIVE OBJECTIVES FOR A STRONGER TAIWAN

Source: National Development Council

### Cultural Taiwan



- Strengthen the cultural governance system
- Boost the cultural economy including film, TV and music content production
- Build a support infrastructure for arts creation
- Enhance cultural and historical preservation
- Protect Hakka, indigenous and new immigrant cultures

### Green Silicon Island



- Foster renewable energy to achieve a nuclear-free homeland
- Develop energy storage technologies and green industries
- Speed up construction of smart grids
- Advance energy conservation and management

### Smart Digital Nation



- Improve digital and mobile broadband infrastructure
- Build a friendly regulatory environment
- Cultivate cross-sector talent for AI development
- Support digital research and conduct financial technology trials

### Just Society



- Enact pension and transitional justice reforms
- Protect labor rights, advance worker safety and raise the minimum wage
- Enhance gender equality and implement same-sex marriage rights
- Boost social housing development and urban renewal
- Promote a new anti-money laundering system

### Happy Homeland



- Combat illicit drugs and cross-border fraud
- Increase support for child rearing and talent retention
- Implement the Long-term Care Plan 2.0 launched in 2017
- Ensure sustainability in land use
- Promote balanced regional development

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 Office of the President. 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 presidential election, marking the third transition of power since the country's democratization.

In the January 2016 legislative elections, the DPP gained 60 percent of the seats in the Legislature, while the KMT secured 31 percent. Other major parties that have a presence in the Legislature include the New Power Party and the People First Party.

## FIVE BRANCHES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Executive Yuan

Legislative Yuan

Examination Yuan

Judicial Yuan

Control Yuan

## LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

Taipei City (capital city)

New Taipei City

Taoyuan City

Hsinchu City

Hsinchu County

Miaoli County

Taichung City

Changhua County

Penghu County

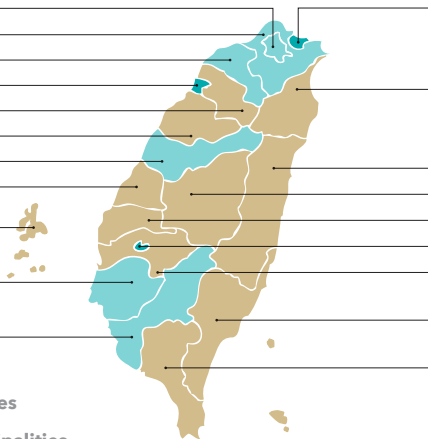
Tainan City

Kaohsiung City

6 Special municipalities

3 Autonomous municipalities

13 Counties



**Formulates and implements policies**

**Reviews and enacts legislation, conducts hearings on policy matters, examines budgetary bills and government operations**

**Manages the civil service system**

**Oversees the nation's court system**

**Impeaches and censures officials, audits government agencies**

Keelung City

Yilan County

Hualien County

Nantou County

Yunlin County

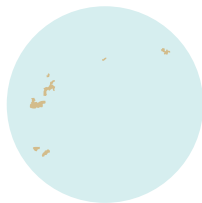
Chiayi City

Chiayi County

Taitung County

Pingtung County

Lienchiang County



Kinmen County





President Tsai Ing-wen (left), and King Mswati III meet at Lozitha Royal Palace April 17, 2018, in the Kingdom of Eswatini. Tsai was on a four-day state visit for celebrations marking 50 years of independence for the African nation, the king's 50th birthday and 50 years of bilateral ties. (Courtesy of Office of the President)



# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## FACT FOCUS:

**More than 160 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 official 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 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 mutual benefits.

The ROC has diplomatic relations with 17 countries and substantive ties with many others. From Jan. 7-15, 2017, President Tsai visited four diplomatic allies in Central America: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. During this trip, she attended the inauguration ceremony of Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and held bilateral talks with the heads of state of these countries. From Oct. 28 to Nov. 4, 2017, President Tsai visited three diplomatic allies in the Pacific: Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. During this trip, she established agreements for more exchanges with these countries and visited several Taiwan-backed collaborative projects spanning climate change, disease prevention and renewable energy.

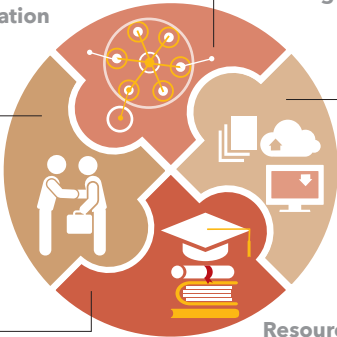
## NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY

**Economic and trade cooperation**

**Regional links**

**Talent cultivation**

**Resource sharing**



## International Participation

Taiwan has full membership in 37 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 21 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 seek support for its participation in U.N. specialized agencies and mechanisms focused on welfare and development such as the World Health Organization, International Civil Aviation Organization and U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change. Japan, the U.S., European nations and other countries have voiced support for Taiwan's participation in U.N. specialized agencies and mechanisms such as ICAO and UNFCCC.

As of Feb. 21, 2018, 167 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 15 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 official 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. In the new National Security Strategy unveiled by U.S. President Donald J. Trump Dec. 18, 2017, the U.S. reaffirmed its commitment to providing defensive weapons to Taiwan under the TRA.

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 and the rule of law, Taiwan and the EU, together with other European countries, have expanded cooperation and exchanges across numerous fields such as economics, technology and culture. For instance, economic and trade ties

between Taiwan and European countries are stable and close. The EU is Taiwan's fifth-largest trading partner and largest source of foreign direct investment, with accumulated investment reaching more than US\$61.52 billion as of 2017.

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 second annual meeting on maritime affairs in Taipei City Dec. 20, 2017. 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 scientific research, and concluded with the signing of a memorandum of understanding on search and rescue operations.

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 the South China Sea issue. 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, strengthening humanitarian response 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



A doctor from Changhua Christian Hospital in central Taiwan examines a patient during a medical mission to Nepal. (Courtesy of CCH)

the government's presence on Taiping Island as well as the Dongsha (Pratas) Islands, the Coast Guard Administration has conducted 75 disaster response and humanitarian aid missions and assisted 105 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 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, 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 investment 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.

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.



Taipei City-based Straits Exchange Foundation facilitates cross-strait communication and negotiations. (Chin Hung-hao)



# CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

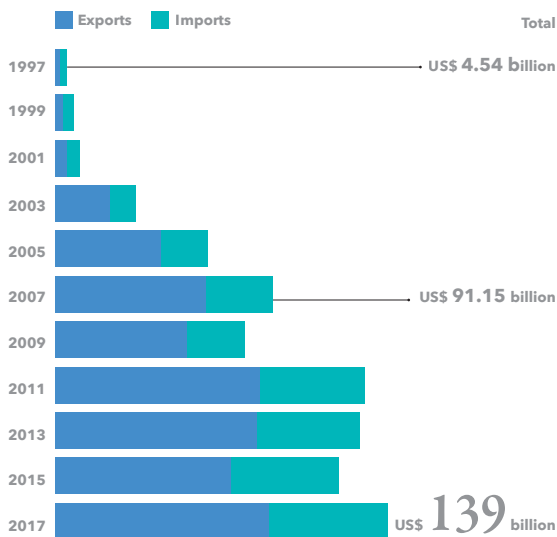
## FACT FOCUS:

**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

## CROSS-STRAIT TRADE



Source: Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance

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. In 2017, the value of cross-strait bilateral trade was US\$139 billion. In that year, travelers from China made nearly 2.7 million visits to Taiwan, up from 329,204 in 2008.

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 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, stable external environment, especially with regard to relations with China. President Tsai Ing-wen, since taking office May 20, 2016, 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 1992, the two institutions representing each side of the strait, the SEF and ARATS, through communication and negotiations, arrived at various joint acknowledgements and understandings. This was done in a spirit of mutual understanding and a political attitude of seeking common ground while setting aside differences. The government respects this historical fact. Since 1992, over 20 years of interactions and negotiations across the strait have enabled and accumulated outcomes that both sides must collectively cherish and sustain; and it is based on such existing realities and political foundations that the stable and peaceful development of the cross-strait relationship must be continuously promoted.

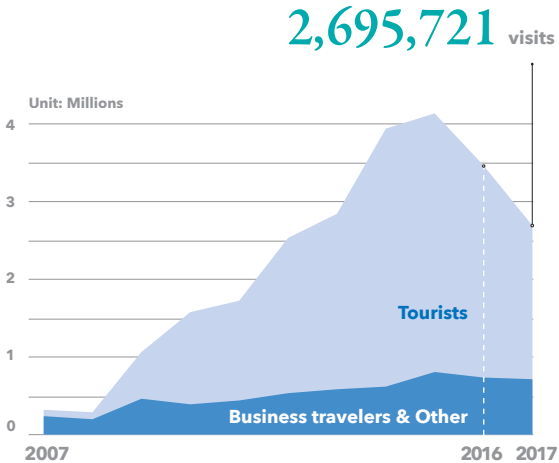
### **Consistent Approach**

The government will continue to address cross-strait ties based on the historical fact of the 1992 talks, 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 of 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. The two sides of the strait should sit down and talk as soon as possible. Anything can be included for discussion, as long as it is conducive to the development of cross-strait peace and the welfare of the people. Wisdom and flexibility, as well as a calm attitude, can advance a divided present toward a win-win future.

### VISITORS FROM CHINA TO TAIWAN



Source: National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior



Firms of all  
shapes and  
sizes contribute  
to the global success  
of Taiwan's fastener  
manufacturing industry.  
(Chuang Kung-ju)



# ECONOMY

## FACT FOCUS:

**Taiwan was the world's 16th largest exporter of merchandise in 2017.**

**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.**

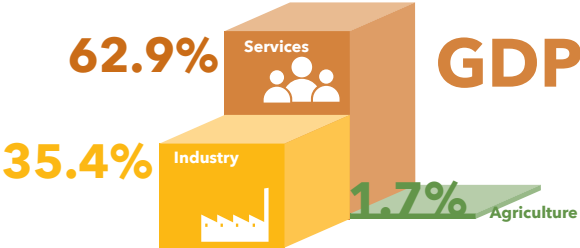
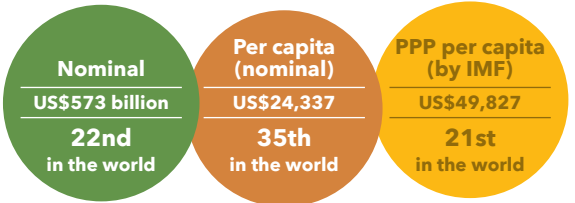
Taiwan occupies an important position in the global economy. It is a top player in the world's information and communication technology industry as well as a major supplier of goods across the industrial spectrum.

According to the World Trade Organization, Taiwan was the 16th largest exporter and 18th largest importer of merchandise in 2017. It was also one of the largest holders of foreign exchange reserves as of December 2017. Taiwan's gross domestic product per capita reached US\$24,337 in 2017. In terms of nominal GDP, Taiwan ranks close to Argentina and Sweden, while Taiwan's GDP per capita expressed as purchasing power parity is similar to that of Austria and Denmark.

### Trade Growth

After weathering the global financial crisis of 2009, Taiwan's export-oriented economy took another hit

#### GDP SNAPSHOT (2017)



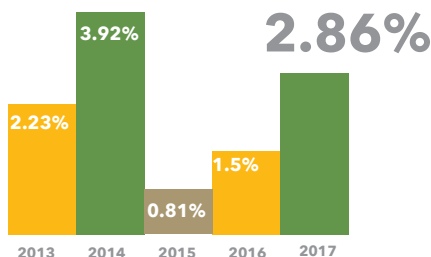
in 2015, mainly due to the weak global demand for consumer electronics products, coupled with the falling price of crude oil. Taiwan's economy grew only 0.81 percent and its overall trade volume decreased by 13.2 percent in 2015. The situation has improved since 2016, and statistics indicate that in 2017 Taiwan's overall exports and imports increased by 13.2 percent and 12.5 percent respectively, while its economy expanded 2.86 percent, higher than in 2016.

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 2017 were no exception (see table "Global Survey Rankings" p. 54-55).

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.

Taiwan has also completed research with Indonesia and India on the feasibility of an economic cooperation

## ECONOMIC GROWTH RATES



Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics

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 blocks as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

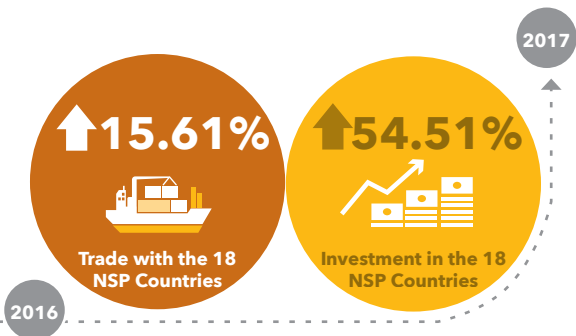
### Development Approaches

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 five-plus-two industrial innovation program. These are the five emerging 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

## NEW SOUTHBOUND POLICY TRACKER



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.

## GLOBAL SURVEY RANKINGS

<b>Topic of Survey (Date of Publication)</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<b>World Competitiveness Scoreboard (May 2018)</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Investment climate (August 2018)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Networked Readiness Index 2016 (July 2016)</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Index of Economic Freedom (February 2018)</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Legatum Prosperity Index (November 2015)</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Ease of Doing Business (October 2017)</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Global Competitiveness Index 2017-2018 (September 2017)</b>	<b>15</b>

Under this approach, the government aims to raise wage levels and enhance regional development. 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.

<b>Countries Surveyed</b>	<b>Surveying Institution</b>
<b>63</b>	<b>International Institute for Management Development</b>
<b>50</b>	<b>Business Environment Risk Intelligence</b>
<b>139</b>	<b>World Economic Forum</b>
<b>186</b>	<b>Heritage Foundation &amp; The Wall Street Journal</b>
<b>142</b>	<b>Legatum Institute</b>
<b>190</b>	<b>World Bank</b>
<b>137</b>	<b>World Economic Forum</b>

## TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROFILE (2017)

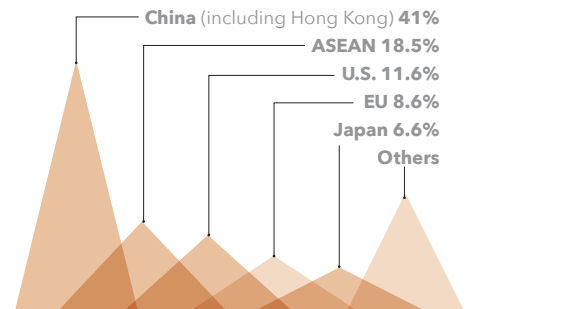
Total trade volume: US\$576.9 billion

Exports: US\$317.4 billion

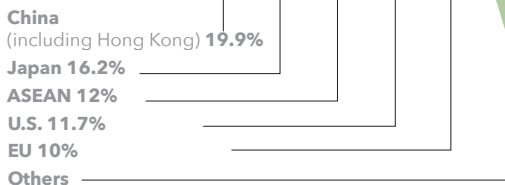
Imports: US\$259.5 billion

Trade balance: US\$57.9 billion surplus

### Top export destinations:



### Top import sources:



Foreign exchange reserves: **US\$451.5 billion**

(As of December 2017)

Registered outward investment: **US\$20.31 billion**

• Top five destinations

China	US\$8.74 billion
British territories in the Caribbean	US\$5.9 billion
Singapore	US\$915 million
U.S.	US\$836 million
Vietnam	US\$683 million

Registered inward investment: **US\$7.7 billion**

• Top five sources

The Netherlands	US\$1.89 billion
British territories in the Caribbean	US\$1.71 billion
U.K.	US\$1.13 billion
Japan	US\$640 million
Samoa	US\$387 million



Launched into orbit Aug. 25, 2017, Formosat-5 is a homegrown ultra-high resolution Earth observation satellite operated by the National Space Organization.  
(Courtesy of NSO)



# SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## FACT FOCUS:

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

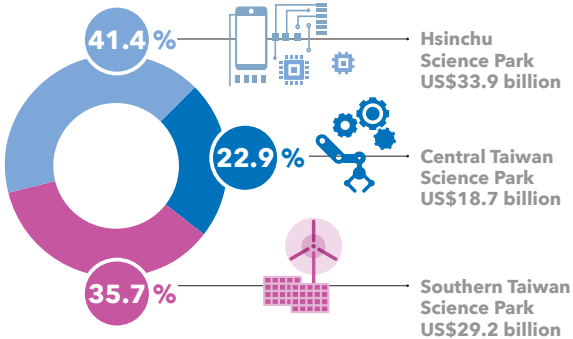
**World Economic Forum ranks Taiwan 15th out of 137 economies in the Global Competitiveness Report released in September 2017.**

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 of applied scientific development. With government support, the Industrial Technology Research Institute,

### TURNOVER OF FIRMS IN TAIWAN'S THREE MAJOR SCIENCE PARKS (2017)



Source: Ministry of Science and Technology

## PRODUCTION VALUE & GLOBAL SHARE OF TAIWAN-MADE PRODUCTS & SERVICES (2016)

### No. 1 Worldwide

Category	Production Value	Quantity	Global Share
	(US\$ million)		(%)
Custom IC fabrication	34,153		67.85
IC testing & packaging	12,548		48.5
Fiberglass cloth		720 million meters	31.6
Chlorella		863 tons	48.45
Functional fabrics	4,206		25.76
High-end bicycles		2,748,900	33.36
Personal navigation devices	1,026		51.7

### No. 2 Worldwide

IC substrates	2,390		24.2
Electro-deposited copper foil	1,030		22.9
IC design	19,613		18.78
Silicon-based solar cells		9,664 MW	15.6
Assistive devices (electric scooters and wheelchairs)		162,000 units	23
Printed circuit boards	7,454		12.8

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

## GLOBAL SURVEY RANKINGS

Topic of Survey (Date of Publication)	Rank (category)
Global Competitiveness Report 2017-2018 (September 2017)	25 (technological readiness) 11 (innovation)
2018 World Competitiveness (May 2018)	18 (technological infrastructure) 10 (scientific infrastructure)

the National Applied Research Laboratories and the 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 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. The institute's innovative prowess is best illustrated by the fact that in the past 10 years it has won a total of 36 R&D 100 Awards, highly prestigious honors given out by U.S.-based R&D Magazine.

The goal of ITRI is to boost Taiwan's global competitiveness by providing a platform for digital transformation. The institute conducts R&D on

<b>Countries Surveyed</b>	<b>Surveying Institution</b>
137	World Economic Forum
63	International Institute for Management Development Yearbook

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.

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 integrated circuits, nanotechnology, optoelectronics and precision machinery.

# PRESIDENT TSAI ING-WEN'S FIVE-PLUS-TWO INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION PROGRAM

(Illustrations by Cho Yi-ju and Lin Hsin-chieh)

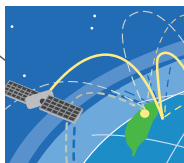
## Biotech and Pharmaceutical Industry

- Bolster the R&D capabilities of firms in Taipei's Nangang Software Park, Hsinchu Biomedical Science Park, Central Taiwan Science Park and Southern Taiwan Science Park, all connected via the high-speed railway system
- Utilize Taiwan's grasp of genetic structures, lifestyles and living environments in East Asia to boost the nation's position in the world's biomedical value chains
- Enhance cooperative efforts with the three major U.S. biomedical hubs of Boston, San Diego and the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as with European countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland



## Smart Machinery Industry

- Boost the development of the machine tools and smart machinery industries in and around Taichung City by providing assistance in areas such as talent recruitment, R&D, land acquisition and marketing
- Spur innovation so sectors such as aviation, submarines, precision medicine and the Internet of Things can benefit from advances in smart machinery technology



## Green Energy Industry

- Build a sustainable energy technology park in Tainan City's Shalun area
- Facilitate energy saving through coordination among equipment suppliers, ICT businesses and energy service providers
- Promote electricity generation from a wide variety of renewable sources, including solar, wind, geothermal, biofuel, wave and tidal
- Cultivate efficient energy storage through the promotion of lithium battery, fuel cell and hydrogen power use by local companies
- Help foster the creation of local businesses specializing in green energy system integration



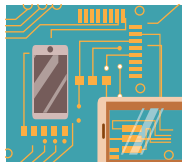
## National Defense Industry

- Provide support to the information security industry cluster in northern Taiwan's Taipei, the aviation industry in central Taiwan's Taichung and the shipbuilding industry in southern Taiwan's Kaohsiung
- Make defense-related purchases that have social and economic benefits in areas such as employment, technological innovation and local business development
- Promote defense-related technologies with applications in the military and civilian sectors



## Asia Silicon Valley

- Develop Taoyuan City into a smart technologies R&D hub
- Foster the growth of firms involved in producing Internet of Things technologies
- Enhance ties between local businesses and companies in California's Silicon Valley with a focus on technology, capital and talent
- Build an innovation and research talent exchange center near Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport that will maintain close ties with similar facilities in Silicon Valley



## New Agriculture

- Protect farmers, foster agricultural development and ensure environmental sustainability
- Safeguard product safety and quality and build a trustworthy label certification system consistent with international standards
- Make the industry profitable and sustainable, diversify domestic and external sales channels and increase the added value of agricultural industries



## Circular Economy

- Allow the circulation and reutilization of energy, improving resource efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and ensuring the waste energy and materials of a factory become the input resources of a neighboring one
- Ensure new industrial parks are designed according to the concept of the circular economy





Children  
climb a rope in a  
playground at Taipei  
Municipal Hushan  
Elementary School.  
(Chuang Kung-ju)



# EDUCATION

## FACT FOCUS:

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

**There are 144 universities and 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 45 percent of

Taiwan's population aged 15 and above, a 10 percentage point increase over the past decade.

To offer students a longer period of basic learning, the Ministry of Education extended compulsory education in Taiwan from nine to 12 years beginning in 2014. Every year in competitions such as the International Science Olympiad, young students from Taiwan win distinctions in biology, chemistry, earth sciences, mathematics 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 interested in Chinese studies, as well as those 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 university 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

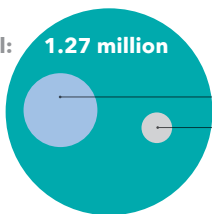
**Literacy rate** (15 or older): **98.8 percent** (2017)

**Outlays for education, science and culture:**  
**20.2 percent of central government budget** (2017)

**Institutions of higher learning: 157**  
(144 universities and colleges, 13 junior colleges)

**Students enrolled in institutions of higher learning:**

**Total: 1.27 million**



**Master's programs: 168,783**

**Doctoral programs: 28,346**

(2017)



Traditional oil-paper umbrellas are exhibited at Taoyuan Hakka Culture Hall in the northern Taiwan city. (Chin Hung-hao)



# 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 and

National Museum of History. Traditional architecture abounds, not only in the country's magnificent temples, 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



Performers at the 2016 Golden Melody Awards for Traditional Arts and Music highlights aspects of folk religion. (Courtesy of Ministry of Culture)

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.



A visitor  
browses a novel  
at the Thinkers'  
Theater bookstore and  
performance space in the  
Dadaocheng area of Taipei  
City. (Chin Hung-hao)

# MASS MEDIA

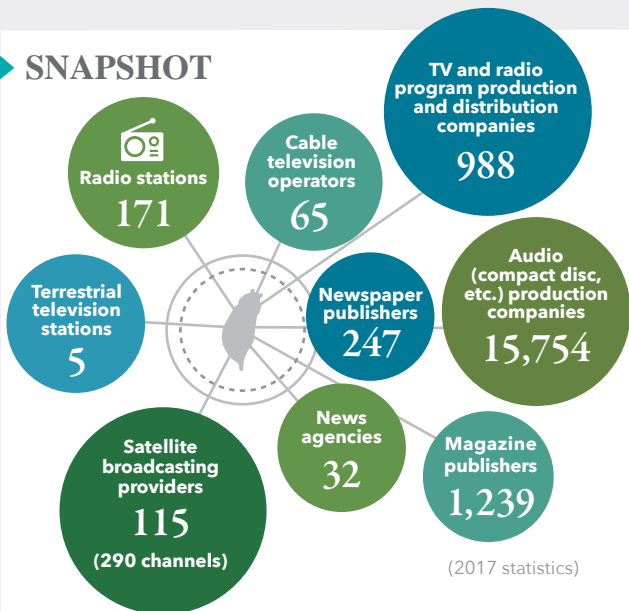
## FACT FOCUS:

**Taiwan tops Asia in press freedom for the sixth straight year in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders.**

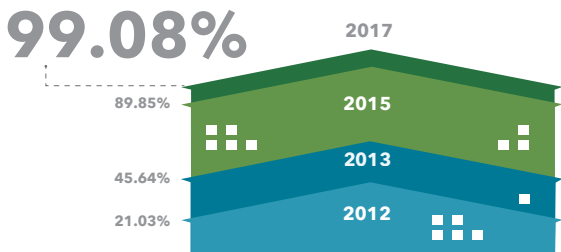
**Smartphone ownership reached 89.48 percent in 2017.**

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.

## SNAPSHOT



## DIGITAL TV HOUSEHOLD PENETRATION RATE



Source: Ministry of Culture and National Communications Commission

Taiwan was ranked the top Asian nation for the sixth consecutive year in the 2018 World Press Freedom Index released April 25 by France-based Reporters Without Borders (RSF). In the survey of 180 countries and territories, Taiwan jumped three places to 42nd, one ahead of South Korea, with Japan, 67th; Hong Kong, 70th; Singapore, 151st; and China, 176th. Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands topped the index, in that order.

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 40,401 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.



The vibrantly painted walls of Rainbow Military Dependents' Village in central Taiwan's Taichung City attract visitors from home and abroad. (Courtesy of Taichung City Government)



# VISITING TAIWAN

## FACT FOCUS:

**Citizens of 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 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 are also equipped with state-of-the-art mass rapid transit systems.

## 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

### Languages

Taiwan Tourism Bureau <a href="http://www.taiwan.net.tw">www.taiwan.net.tw</a>	English, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese
Travel Information Hotline 0800-011-765 (24 hours)	Mandarin, English, Japanese
National Immigration Agency <a href="http://www.immigration.gov.tw">www.immigration.gov.tw</a>	Mandarin, English
Information for Foreigners Hotline 0800-024-111	24 hours: Mandarin, English, Japanese 9:00-17:00 on weekdays: Indonesian, Khmer, Thai, Vietnamese

Two tatalas, traditional wooden boats made by Taiwan's indigenous Tao tribe, are beached at outlying Lanyu, or Orchid Island.  
(Yeh Jui-tsung)



# MAJOR FESTIVALS & EVENTS



## Month Festival/Event\*

Jan. New Year's Eve Celebrations

Feb. Taipei International Book Exhibition

March Pingxi International Sky  
Lantern Festival

Tainan Yanshui Beehive  
Fireworks Festival

Taiwan Lantern Festival\*\*

Mazu International Festival  
(religious pilgrimage)

April

Hakka Tung Blossom Festival

Penghu Ocean Fireworks Festival

Fulong Sand Sculpture Art Festival

May Spring Wave Music and Art Festival

June Lugang Dragon Boat Festival

Xiuguluan River Rafting Activity

July Taiwan International Balloon Festival

Hohaiyan Gongliao Rock Festival

\*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 Pingtung County in 2019.





Aug. Taiwan Culinary Exhibition

Sun Moon Lake International  
Swimming Carnival

Sept.

The Most Beautiful Bays Carnival  
in Penghu

Sun Moon Lake Cycling, Music and  
Fireworks Festival

Oct.

Art Taipei  
(international contemporary art fair)

National Palace Museum Asian  
Arts Festival

Sanyi International Woodcarving  
Art Festival

Nov.

Taichung World Flora Exposition

Kunshen Wangye's Salt for  
Peace Festival (folk culture)

Taiwan Open of Surfing

Taroko Gorge Marathon

Gaillardia Island-2018 Penghu  
Cross-sea Marathon

Asian Bird Watching Fair

Dec. Taipei Marathon

(Illustrations by Cho Yi-ju)



## 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)

**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.y SNP.gov.tw](http://www.y SNP.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)

## 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](http://tour.taitung.gov.tw)

Taijiang National Park  
(Jimmy Lin)



## Currency

New Taiwan dollar (NT\$ or TWD)

Exchange rate: NT\$31.05 per US\$1 (August 2018)

## Time Zone

All territories in same time zone, UTC +8 hours

(no seasonal adjustments)

## 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.

## Tipping

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

## Electricity

AC 110 V / 60 Hz

## 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)

## 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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