

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Taiwan

CAPITAL: Taipei

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Multiparty Republic

AREA: 36,174 Sq Km (13,967 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION: 22,069,700



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Taiwan is an island republic consisting of Taiwan Island, the Pescadores, Lan Hsu, Lu Tao and some other smaller islands. The main island is located 130 km (81 miles) southeast off the coast of mainland China. It is bound by the Taiwan Strait to the west, the South China Sea to the south, the East China Sea to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the east. Taiwan Island has a mountain range that runs north to south and covers around 66% of the land area. Most of the low lying land is located on the west side of the island which is generally flat and fertile. Major Cities (pop. est.); Taipei 2,652,700, Kaohsiung 1,416,200, Taichung 836,600, Tainan 702,700 (1994). Land Use; forested 55%, pastures and agricultural-cultivated 25%, other 20% (1980).

CLIMATE: Taiwan has a tropical climate that is influenced by the monsoons. Summers are hot and humid while winters are mild and short. Typhoons from the South China Sea bring heavy rains between July and September. Average annual precipitation is over 2,000 mm (79 inches) in the low lying areas and increases with altitude. Average temperature ranges in Taipei are from 12 to 18 degrees Celsius (54 to 64 degrees Fahrenheit) in February to 24 to 34 degrees Celsius (75 to 91 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Han Chinese who account for 98% of the population, of which 14% are from mainland China. The remainder are Aborigines of Malayo-Polynesian origin and are mainly concentrated in the central and eastern areas of the island.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 569 persons per sq km (1,474 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 74.7% urban, 25.3% rural (1991). Sex Distribution; 51.6% male, 48.4% female (1993). Life Expectancy at Birth; 71.8 years male, 77.2 years female (1991). Age Breakdown; 26% under 15, 28% 15 to 29, 24% 30 to 44, 12% 45 to 59, 8% 60 to 74, 2%

75 and over (1991). Birth Rate; 16.6 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 5.2 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 11.4 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 5.1 per 1,000 live births (1991).

RELIGIONS: The principal religions include Buddhism which accounts for 43% of the population while Taoism and Confucianism account for 48% and Christianity also accounts for 7.4% of the population.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Mandarin Chinese, although Hokkien and Hakka dialects are also widely spoken.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 2.3%, incomplete primary 7.8%, primary 33.5%, incomplete secondary 20.6%, secondary 22.3%, incomplete college 7.4%, higher 6.1% (1989). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 13,447,304 or 92.0% (1989).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: In 1949 the Nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) led by Gen. Chiang Kaishek fled to Taiwan and established the Republic of China as communist forces overtook the mainland. In Jan. 1951 the US announced that it would only recognize the KMT in Taiwan as the sole representative of mainland China. In 1954 the US and Nationalist Chinese governments signed a mutual Defense Treaty. In 1972, US Pres. Richard Nixon visited the People's Republic of China (mainland - PRC) and agreed to gradually withdraw US military forces from Taiwan. During the 1970's a number of nations ended their diplomatic relations with Taiwan and established ties directly with the PRC. In 1978 Pres. Chiang Kaishek died and was replaced by Dr Yen Chiakan. In 1978 Dr. Yen retired and was succeeded by Prime Minister Gen. Chiang Chingkuo, who was also Chiang Kaishek's son. In Jan. 1979 the US formally recognized the communist government of the PRC, and the mutual Defense Treaty between the US and Taiwan ended on Dec. 31, 1979. In Mar. 1984 Gen. Chiang was re-elected as President. In Sept. 1986 the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DDP) was established. In July 1987 Martial Law was lifted and replaced by a new National Security Law. In Jan. 1988 Pres. Chiang Chingkuo died and was succeeded by his Vice President, Lee Tenghui. In Sept. 1990 Taiwan re-announced its claim over the uninhabited Senkaku or Diaoyutai Islands which are administered by Japan and which China also has a claim to. In April 1991 a delegation from Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation visited Beijing, China to establish direct links with the PRC Communist officials. In May 1991 Pres. Lee lifted the state of siege regarding the "Communist rebellion" which had lasted for 43 years. Following the restructure of the political system as a result of the lifting of the 1948 emergency decree the DDP led mass demonstrations and violently disrupted the National Assembly. In Oct. 1991 the DPP overwhelmingly approved a resolution calling for the establishment of an independent Republic of Taiwan following a referendum and the renunciation of territorial claims to mainland China. Both Pres. Lee and the People's Republic

of China denounced the DPP's independence calls. In Dec. 1991 National Assembly elections resulted in the KMT gaining 254 of the 325 elected seats with 71% of the vote while the DPP won 66 seats. Also in 1991 Taiwan applied to rejoin the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in an attempt to improve its international isolation as a result of direct diplomatic relations being established by the international community with the PRC in the 1970's. In 1992 many countries including the former Soviet nations established closer unofficial relations with Taiwan. On March 20, 1992 the second National Assembly convened to consider revisions to the constitution with the DPP proposing the President be directly elected by the people, although the decision was later deferred until 1995. However, the National Assembly did approve amendments to reduce the power of the Legislative Yuan and cut the terms of the President and elected National Assembly members from six years to four as well as approved the direct popular election of provincial governors and magistrates. In Sept. 1992 US Pres. George Bush approved the sale of up to 150 F-16 fighters to Taiwan, thereby reversing a long standing US policy. In Dec. 1992 elections were held for the new Legislative Yuan in which the KMT won 91 of the 161 seats followed by the DPP with 50 seats. Also in 1992 the PRC threatened to use force to preserve Taiwan's status as a province of mainland China, should it proclaim its independence as the Republic of Taiwan. On Feb. 10, 1993 the National Assembly ratified Pres. Lee's nomination of Lien Chan to succeed Premier Hau Pei-tsun as head the Executive Yuan. In April 1993 and in response to increased US pressure the government passed further legislation to protect intellectual property rights, in particular with computer software. In Aug. 1993 the KMT's National Party Congress reelected Lee as Chairman of the KMT while a small group of second generation mainland Chinese in KMT formed a faction party, the Chinese New Party, in an attempt to force the KMT into undertaking direct talks with the PRC and the establishment of transportation links with the mainland. In Sept. 1993 the US concluded the sale of 41 Harpoon anti ship missiles to Taiwan. In Nov. 1993 local elections resulted in the KMT gaining an extra office at the DPP's expense. Also in 1993 direct talks were held with the PRC in April and November over growing economic relations, and Taiwan also futilely applied to rejoin the UN, following the UN's 1971 decision to withdraw recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan) in favor of the PRC.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the New Taiwan Dollar (NTD) divided into 100 Cents.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$244,650,000,000 (1994). Public Debt; NTD \$553,547,000,000 (1993). Imports; NTD \$2,261,651,000,000 (1994). Exports; NTD \$2,456,011,000,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$2,943,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; NTD \$194,360,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 10,236,324 or 50.5% of total population (1990). Unemployed; 1.6% (1994).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are the USA, Japan and Hong Kong.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Bananas, Citrus Fruits, Coal, Fish, Pigs, Pineapples, Poultry, Rice, Sulfur, Sugar Cane, Sweet Potatoes, Timber.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Cement, Chemicals, Electrical and Electronic Goods, Fertilizers, Fishing, Forestry, Glass, Iron and Steel, Mining, Paper, Plastics, Textiles.

MAIN EXPORTS: Clothing, Electrical and Electronic Goods, Food, Footwear, Textiles, Toys and Sporting Goods.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 4,600 km (2,858 mi) (1989), passenger-km 8,144,900,000 (5,061,005,000 passenger-mi) (1989), cargo ton-km 2,115,500,000 (1,448,906,000 short ton-mi) (1989). Roads; length 19,998 km (12,426 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 1,969,291 (1989), trucks and buses 595,428 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 660 (1990), deadweight tonnage 8,714,202 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 20,797,349,000 (12,922,870,000 short ton-mi) (1989), cargo ton-km 3,726,959,000 (2,552,594,000 short ton-mi) (1989).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 93 with a total circulation of 4,000,000 (1988). Radio; receivers 8,620,000 (1994). Television; receivers 7,000,000 (1994). Telephones; units 7,950,500 (1993).

MILITARY: 425,000 (1994) total active duty personnel with 68.0% army, 16.0% navy and 16.0% air force while military expenditure accounts for 4.7% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).