



Viable Path to Prosperity

The Republic of China (Taiwan) will celebrate its National Day on October 10 and the new government under President Tsai is making every effort to ensure future prosperity.

President Tsai Ing-wen, who took office in May, has pledged to revitalize Taiwan's economy by pursuing a New Model for Economic Development, one that focuses on innovation, employment and equitable wealth distribution. The public, having experienced years of stagnant wages, elected her with the expectation that she would guide the country down a path toward increased salaries, improved working conditions and greater job opportunities. These weighty goals can be achieved, but not overnight. They are just part of the Tsai administration's plans for an economic transformation that will foster domestic innovation while at the same time diversifying trade by, among other things, increasing the nation's presence in South and Southeast Asia.

The president's focus on the economy is demonstrated by her appointment of Lin Chuan as premier. A former finance minister, he has decades of experience in the public and private sectors and is

known as an advocate of financial reform, having spearheaded the creation of the alternative minimum tax system. His expertise will be an invaluable asset to the Cabinet as the government pushes forward its initiatives.

A key step to achieving this new economic model is to reinforce the nation's relations with countries around the globe while pursuing bilateral and multilateral trade agreements. Of particular importance to the new administration is the U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). The comprehensive trade agreement, which has not yet come into force, has been signed by 12 countries around the Pacific Rim that combined account for just shy of 40 percent of global gross domestic product. The president has expressed her hope that the United States will support Taiwan's bid for inclusion in the next round of TPP negotiations.

One of the most significant challenges for the Tsai administration is export



Source: Taiwan Review

diversification. Currently, mainland China, including Hong Kong, accounts for roughly 40 percent of Taiwan's exports, with a further 18 percent going to Southeast Asia and 12 percent to the United States. In order to decrease the nation's overreliance on a single market, Tsai has devised her New Southbound Policy. The plan involves enhancing ties with Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states and South Asian countries such as India, and is being organized by the recently inaugurated New Southbound Policy Office under the Office of the President.

In order to ensure its continued economic prosperity, Taiwan must boost its competitiveness and attract greater levels of investment from overseas. The key to this is innovation, a concept at the core of Tsai's five major industrial development objectives. The president's strategy centers on boosting

the capabilities of five major local industries, namely biotech and pharmaceuticals, sustainable energy, national defense, smart machinery, as well as the Internet of Things and other smart technologies. For the latter industry, the president has proposed northern Taiwan's Taoyuan City as the hub of the Asian Silicon Valley initiative, which aims to transform the special municipality into a center of high-tech innovation and entrepreneurship.

It will take time for this new vision of economic revitalization to come to pass. Tsai has asked that the people be patient, that they be optimistic, but most of all that they be resolutely united behind the common goal of ushering in a new era for the nation. The president's plan is a viable path to economic prosperity, but it will take the concerted efforts of the government, businesses and private individuals to make it a reality.

Female breadwinner numbers hit record high in Taiwan

Nearly 2.45 million households in Taiwan, or 29.2 percent of the national total, were supported primarily by female income earners in 2015, up 130,000 year on year, according to the Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS).

The trend is attributed by the DGBAS in its latest national family income and expenditure survey to better education and economic independence for females, as well as an increasing gap in the life expectancies



of men and women over the past decade.

Further breakdown of the data reveals that 45 percent of families in the bottom 20 percentile were supported mainly by females, up from 34 percent 10 years ago.



Source: Taiwan Today, Photo: Huang Chung-hsin

The same pattern is present in the other four percentiles as well. “Low-income households tend to be single-parent families with a woman as the main breadwinner,” a DGBAS official said. “Increases in the other four percentiles reflect a general improvement in the earning capacities of women in Taiwan.”

According to the survey, Taiwan’s average household income inched up 0.9 percent to NT\$1.22 million (US\$32,472) in 2015, with disposable income rising 0.8 percent to NT\$964,895 per household and 2.5 percent to NT\$311,256 per capita. On average, each household saved NT\$205,248, up 1.8 percent year on year.

The survey also found that 84.2 percent of Taiwan’s households live in owner-occupied residences averaging 145.46 square meters per family, or 46.94 square meters per capita. Over 59 percent of households had a car, 85.4 percent cable TV services and 77.9 percent internet connections. Another DGBAS report released in early March shows that Taiwan’s women made significant socioeconomic gains in 2015. Average monthly salaries for females grew 2.9 percent as compared to 2.3 percent for males, while around 45 percent of the former were tertiary educated in contrast to 39.3 percent for the latter. There were 11.78 million women in Taiwan last year, 68,000 more than men.

Innovation lifts Taiwan to 14th in global competitiveness

Taiwan moved up one spot to 14th in the Global Competitiveness Report released September 28 by World Economic Forum (WEF), with the country outperforming in the innovation pillar of the annual survey conducted by the Geneva-based nonprofit foundation since 2006.

Its score of 5.28, the same as last year, saw Taiwan finish ahead of regional neighbors such as South Korea at 26th and mainland China at 28th, but behind Japan at eighth and Hong Kong at ninth. The top three places in the annual survey of 138 economies worldwide went to Switzerland, Singapore and the United States, in that order.

Although Taiwan tallied its highest ranking of 11th in the pillar of innovation, it finished 17th overall in the subindex of innovation and sophistication factors. Taiwan achieved 16th and 14th, respectively, in the subindexes of efficiency enhancers and basic requirements. The WEF also identified three areas for improvement when it comes to doing business in Taiwan: policy

instability, insufficient capacity to innovate and inefficient government bureaucracy.

Thierry Geiger, head of Analytics and Quantitative Research on the WEF’s Global Competitiveness and Risks team, said Taiwan posted small gains in “financial market development” and “technological readiness” in the past year.

But those gains, he said, were offset by small declines in other areas, such as “infrastructure” and “market size,” which left Taiwan’s overall score unchanged from the previous year. “Taiwan is an innovation powerhouse and needs to preserve this status by training and attracting the talent – at the core of the innovation ecosystem – that its economy needs and by encouraging

Source: Taiwan Today, Focus Taiwan



entrepreneurship,” Geiger said. Taiwan was the only major economy besides India in Asia that improved its ranking this year.

In response to the report, the National Development Council said the gov-

ernment is committed to redressing Taiwan’s weaknesses and will continue rolling out corresponding policy measures to ensure the country advances in global competitiveness.

Amis village, coastal area listed among world’s top green destinations

Taiwan’s Cihalaay Cultural Landscape Area and Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area have been included in the 2016 Sustainable Destinations Top 100, a global ranking conducted by some of the world’s leading authorities on environmentally responsible tourism.



Courtesy of Fengnan Community Development Association

Located in Fuli Township of eastern Taiwan’s Hualien County, the Cihalaay Cultural Landscape Area, a village inhabited by members of the indigenous Amis tribe, was selected primarily due to rice farmers’ commitment to eco-friendly practices.

“This Taiwanese destination is known for its rich natural resources, rice terraces and historical irrigation systems that are still used by the local tribal people,” according to the description on the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 website. “Locals do not use herbicides and pesticides and they promote organic rice farming.”

The Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area was chosen for “offering its visitors green mountains, clear waters as well as cultural heritage sites,” the website said. “The destination develops eco-friendly tourism and its effective use in tourism.”

A follow-up to the inaugural 2014 Sustainable Destinations Global Top 100, the rankings assessed destinations’ performance across five themes: nature and scenery; environment and climate; culture and tradition; people and hospitality; and sustainable destination management.



Sustainable Travel International Taiwan Chairwoman Monique Chen, who accepted the award on behalf of the Cihalaay Cultural Landscape Area at a ceremony September 27 in the Slovenian capital of Ljubljana, the European Green Capital of 2016, noted the UN World Tourism

Organization has declared 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism Development. Chen said the inclusion of two Taiwan locations in the global ranking underscores efforts by the government and local communities to advance the UN goal of sustainable tourism development.

National Taichung Theater formally inaugurated

The National Taichung Theater was formally inaugurated September 30 with a grand ceremony, in which Vice President Chen Chien-jen expressed the hope that the new landmark will become the incubation base for performing arts in central Taiwan.



Chen said at the opening ceremony that the development of arts constitutes an important part of Taiwan's civil society, and the young generation of the country's performing artists has gained many accolades in the international arena. The vice president expects the opera house to help Taiwan's art scene be even more firmly rooted.

In addition to Chen, Deputy Legislative Speaker Tsai Chi-chang, Culture Minister Cheng Li-chiun, Taichung Mayor Lin Chia-lung and Japanese architect Toyo Ito, who designed the theater, attended the ceremony, which was followed by the opening show, "Das Rheingold."

The piece is the first part of "Der Ring des Nibelungen (The Ring of the Nibelung)," four epic music dramas by German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883).

It was performed by the Spanish avant-garde theater troupe, La Fura del Baus, along with the Taiwan National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lu Shao-chia.

Construction of the theater began in November 2009, and the facility had a partial opening November 23, 2014 after the main structure was built.

For more information on the new opera house, please visit its [official website](#).



The Imprint of Civilization: The Amazing Journey of Books

The Taipei Representative Office in Hungary is pleased to announce that Taiwan's National Central Library (NCL) is co-organizing an exhibition titled "The Imprint of Civilization: The Amazing Journey of Books" with Hungary's National Széchényi Library (NSZL). To be held from October 18 to December 15, 2016 at NSZL, the exhibition will present the NCL's collection of rare books and inscriptions, as well as the history of books.



The collection comprises rare or authoritative editions from the Song (960-1279), Yuan (1271-1368), and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties, and hand-copied Buddhist sutras dating from the Southern and Northern (420-589), Sui (581-681) and Tang (618-907) dynasties. Other exhibited items include manuscripts by famous writers, oracle stone inscriptions and rubbings of stone and bronze inscriptions, among others.

Visitors will also be treated to an array of printing and binding techniques, which are tantamount to a microcosm of the evolution of books. The exhibition also has interactive features, such as making woodblocks, threading books and taking memory photos. The opening ceremony of the exhibition

will be held on October 15, 2016. On hand are Mr. István Íjgyártó, Minister of State for Cultural and Science Diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Mr. Wen-lung Tao, head of the Taipei Representative Office in Budapest. Visitors are cordially invited to a Taiwanese afternoon. A lecture on Chinese classics delivered by Professor Max K.W. Huang of Taipei-based Academic Sinica is scheduled at 14:30.

Duration: October 18 to December 15, 2016

Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Venue: Ars Librorum exhibition space and Corvina halls on Floor 6.

The exhibition is free of charge.

Source: Taipei Representative Office in Hungary, National Széchényi Library

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