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Does the Global Concern the Local?
Perspectives and Programs for Foreigners in Selected Localities in Taiwan

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Abstract

Since the 1990s, Taiwan has had to accept a sizeable and increasing number of people from overseas. These range from returning overseas Taiwanese and arriving spouses from China to migrant workers from Southeast Asia as well as expatriate managers and teachers from Europe and the Americas. As of July 2018 Taiwan has no less than 730,000 registered foreign residents. As well, Taiwan's social and political institutions have undergone a remarkable degree of democratic transformation. Local governments are now seen to play a major role in this democratization process. As a result of these developments, local policies are likely to be affected significantly by national and global externalities especially immigration. This paper attempts to analyze and describe the programs that are in place at the local (e.g., county and city) levels to deal with foreign residents in Taiwan and the perspectives of local people towards foreigners. Are there differences in policy and social positions between the local and central governments? What nuances exist between various local government perspectives and positions towards foreigners? What implications would these local perspectives and programs have on Taiwan's New Southbound Policy? The paper finds no major differences between local and central government programs and perspectives toward foreigners in Taiwan. This is perhaps due to the fact that for a long time, local governments have been under strong central government control in Taiwan and have yet to fully come out on their own as distinct units within the political system. At the same time, the New Southbound Policy has yet to go down to the local levels enough for such a perspective to matter.

Introduction

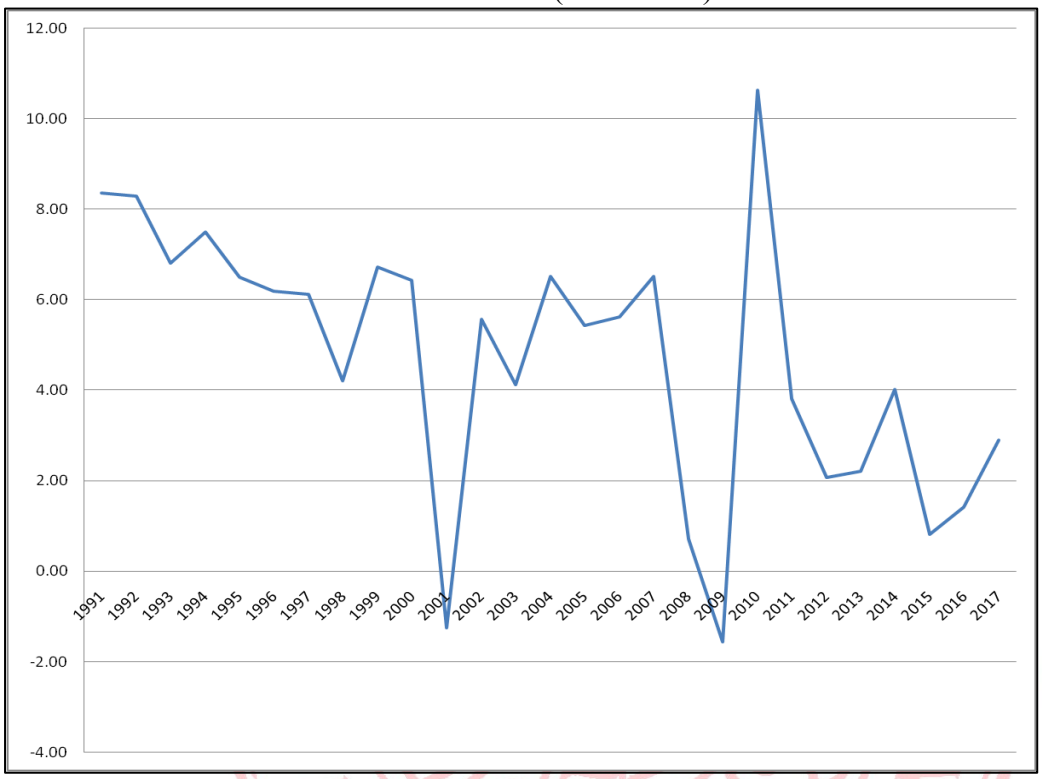
Up to the late 1980s, Taiwan experienced phenomenal economic growth that can only be described as a "miracle" (see World Bank 1993 and Tsai 1999). From the 1950s up to the 1980s, Taiwan's so-called "Tiger economy" grew by an average of 8.8 percent annually (World Bank 1993). Economic growth has led to a degree of prosperity and global competitive edge for Taiwan and ushered its entry into the ranks of the newly industrialized economies (NIEs).

> Between 1952 and 2009, Taiwan's per capita income rose from US$213 to US$16,353; its GDP increased from US$1.711 billion to US$377 billion; and its foreign trade expanded from US$303 million to US$378 billion, with its exports the 17th largest worldwide. (CEPD 2009: 5)

Beginning in the 1990s, however, Taiwan's economy experienced a slow-down as it began to face numerous and serious challenges to its continued economic success. One such major

challenge is the significant shortages in domestic labor required by its burgeoning industrial sector (Tsai 2015). Between 1991 and 2000, Taiwan's annual average economic growth rate went down to 6.7 percent – still high by regional standards – but slower than in the previous decades. However, the average economic growth rate in Taiwan in the last ten years (2008-2017) is now down to just 2.67 percent. The Taiwanese economy has been steadily declining as shown in the figure below.

Taiwan Economic Growth Rate in Percent (1991-2017)

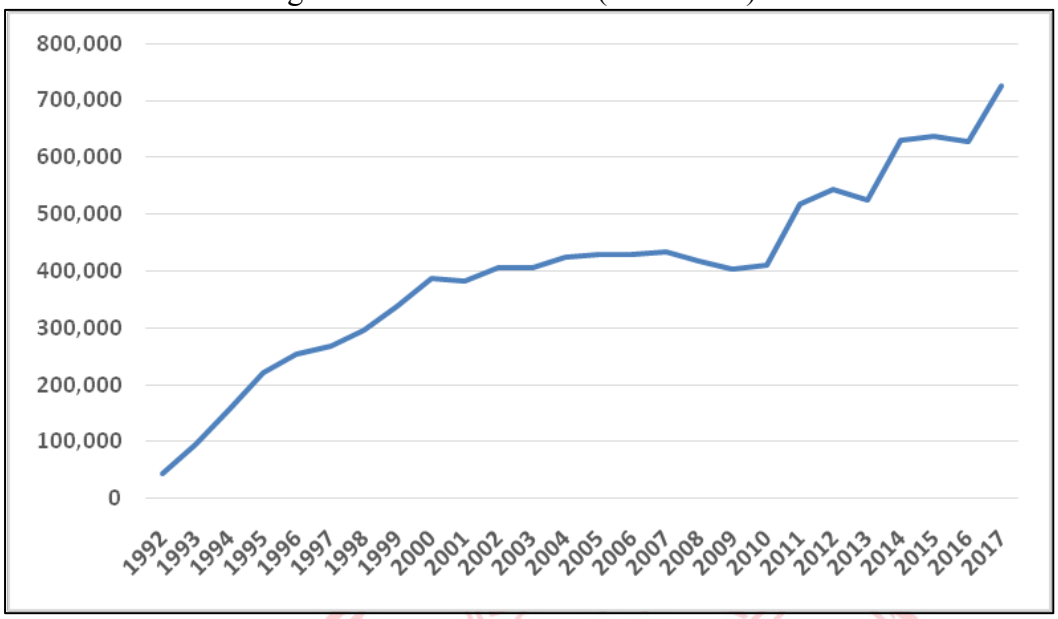


Source: Statistical Bureau

Taiwan now finds it difficult to enjoy the same average rate of growth that it enjoyed up to the 1980s as a Tiger economy. Declining local wage rates and persistent shortages in domestic labor have had a serious and adverse impact on Taiwan's miracle economy. Many Taiwanese employees would now prefer to work overseas themselves (Lie and Huang 2018). Taiwan is a country that is now confronted with its own brain drain or "talent deficit" problem as more and more members of its skilled and experienced local labor force are attracted to work overseas particularly in Mainland China (Denyer 2018).

As a way to temporarily off-set the shortage of domestic labor, Taiwan in 1991 officially opened its labor market to foreign workers and introduced its guest worker program to allow low- and medium-skilled foreigners to work on a temporary basis. Since that time, Taiwan has become a significant receiving market for migrant labor from many countries worldwide mostly but from Southeast Asia. Taiwan's foreign population grew significantly during the 1990s and early 2000s and has grown steadily since then (see figure below). Today there are over 730,000 foreign residents in Taiwan.

Annual Stock of Foreign Residents in Taiwan (1992-2017)



Source: National Immigration Agency (NIA)

Understanding the social and political implications of such immigration flows into Taiwan is important for several reasons. Like many immigrant destinations, Taiwan's population has been undergoing several major demographic shifts that precipitated the need for foreigners in many aspects of everyday life. The fertility rate in Taiwan has been declining steadily leading to an equally steady decline in the population growth rate to below replacement levels. Its age dependency ratios are approaching critical levels as the ageing of the population intensifies. Immigration has come to play an important role in Taiwan demographically, economically, and socially.

For more than three decades now, Taiwan has been transitioning towards greater democracy especially for its bureaucratic apparatus which is no longer insulated from public scrutiny / protest / oversight and is becoming more porous and sensitive to popular claims and interests (see Tan 2000). Democratization and the emergence of mass or grassroots politics have reduced bureaucratic decision-making powers as well as political insulation (Tan 2000). As such, it remains to be seen whether these developments can significantly impact local governments as well as the phenomenon of migration taking place in Taiwan. As Taiwan embarks on the road to democratic deepening and consolidation, there arises a need to understand how this democratization process can impact on or is affected by other socio-economic forces such as the influx of foreigners and the pace of industrialization.

This paper attempts to describe and analyze the intersection between the social force of immigration into Taiwan and the political force of democratization at the local levels. This paper describes and analyzes the local government programs and perspectives in selected areas in Taiwan. More specifically, the localities to be examined are two cities (Taoyuan and Kaohsiung) and two counties (Hsinchu and Chiayi) in Taiwan to learn more about their activities, programs, and attitudes towards foreigners in their respective areas. As will be discussed further below, these are localities have a high proportion of registered foreign residents and are representative of the north-south divide that has characterized Taiwan's social, economic, and political situation. The high proportion of foreign residents (as opposed to their absolute numbers) can provide a better basis for examining the interactions between local and foreign residents. The paper makes use of informant interviews with local officials

and academics as well as available scholarly sources and official policies, programs, and regulations at the both the central and local levels.

In general, Taiwanese attitudes are divided in towards immigration. While a majority of Taiwanese would say that foreigners take jobs that locals do not want; their attitudes are almost equally divided between those that want to maintain and reduce current immigration levels (IOM 2015). This necessitates such a study that would examine the nuances that can be gleaned from local Taiwanese as well as central and local government attitudes, programs, and policies towards immigration and foreign residents.

There are several reasons why this research is relevant to pursue for Taiwan. First, analyzing the issue adds to the complexity of the "China question" that can be seen from the standpoint of Taiwan. Understanding the attitudes of Taiwanese towards foreigners (including their programs towards them) can provide a more nuanced or layered understanding of the question of Taiwan's relations with China as it undergoes democratic deepening and consolidation.

Second, knowing about the local programs for foreigners in Taiwan can lead to a better understanding of the character and nature of this democratization strategy. Moreover, it can potentially lead to an enhancement of the effectiveness of the New Southbound Policy and, hopefully, contribute to better strategic policies for Taiwan in this area for the future. The study can serve to illustrate differences between central and local government perspectives as regards the arrival and stay of foreigners in Taiwan.

Third, local communities do not operate in a vacuum. There are numerous national and global externalities that can impact upon local programs, perspectives, and initiatives. Taiwan has become a major receiving area for foreigners including tourists and long-term immigrants and foreign residents. Many local areas in Taiwan are increasingly becoming destination areas for this growing number of foreigners. Knowing about the programs that local communities offer can provide a more nuanced understanding in the ways that local governments deal with foreigners in their localities. Different local communities stand to be variedly affected by the arrival of foreigners based on their specific domestic conditions.

Fourth, much of what is known by Taiwanese about foreigners and migrant workers in Taiwan concerns the policies of the state and the programs of the national government (e.g., Tsang and Wang 2011). There is still not much that is known about local government programs as well as local perspectives towards foreigners in specific jurisdictions especially in the era of democratic restructuring and consolidation in Taiwan.

Finally, an examination of the local programs for foreigners can provide a better understanding of the dynamic relations between national and local authorities and also compounded by the unique position of Taiwan as both a de facto nation-state and a Chinese "province" at the same time. Knowing local people's attitudes towards foreigners in general can inform us about the unique socio-political situation of Taiwan in relation to China and the rest of the world.

The study of local governments and local perspectives is also important for several reasons. First, looking at these local perspectives and preferences can tell us significantly more about the dynamic workings within local communities beyond the formalities of official government policies and positions especially in the period of democratic consolidation in

Taiwan. Second, understanding the nuances between people's perspectives and local officials' positions on issues can provide keys to how the former is affected by the latter. And third, examining the dynamic between public and official perspectives and actions taken at the local levels can offer national policy-makers and officials a better understanding of the intricacies of statecraft and national policy-making.

While much information can be gleaned from national authorities on Taiwan's immigration policies and procedures, there is little information collected on the perspectives, programs, and attitudes of local government authorities and people living in communities. The diversity of arrivals into Taiwan merits the need to better understand the nuances that play out in different localities. Local perceptions of and attitudes towards foreigners and immigration can also have an impact on Taiwanese national identity. As pointed out by Lin (2014), national identity politics in Taiwan has changed with more and more people seeing themselves as Taiwanese due mainly to demographic (i.e., the growing number of people being born in Taiwan) and economic (i.e., rising economic inequality) factors. Such a trend in identity politics in Taiwan, as it intersects with the growth in the foreign resident population, can have serious implications for how Taiwan would look upon itself in the future within Asia.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the extent to which identities have become a major concern for Taiwan. It draws from the experience in Japan and its local cultural citizenship initiatives. It also attempts at a description of Taiwan's central government immigration strategy. The second section provides the backdrop for the Taiwan cases. It describes the extent to which immigration forces are affected by changing demographic and economic challenges in Taiwan. It also describes the extent of labor migration from Southeast Asia – a key component of the overall immigration flows into Taiwan. Finally, the section discusses the dynamics of local government politics in Taiwan. The third section discusses the case sites and the last section concludes.

Multicultural and Multilevel Identities

A new socio-political ethos has emerged in many countries in East Asia to try to come to terms with the dual realities of the need to deal with (a) the ethno-linguistic and religious cleavages within (Kymlicka and He 2005) and, somewhat relatedly, (b) the changing demographic characters of their respective societies and economies (Kim and Oh 2012). This is the ethos of engaging in multiculturalism and multicultural discourses. The emergence of such engaging and inclusive policies is seen to be key ingredients of democratization and political stability (Kymlicka and He 2005). Societies that used to espouse cultural homogeneity are now confronted with the challenge to embrace cultural diversity in the midst of increasing pressures to accept larger numbers of transnational populations.

In 1997, the Constitution of the Republic of China (ROC is the official name of Taiwan) was amended to recognize the multicultural character (at least in the linguistic sense and more pertinent to the aboriginal) of Taiwan.

> The State affirms cultural pluralism and shall actively preserve and foster the development of aboriginal languages and cultures. (Article 10)

Interestingly, the period of the official acknowledgement of Taiwan as a multicultural nation happened when the island-nation had its first Taiwan-born president – Lee Teng-hui.

Taiwan is also the first in East Asia to promote cultural citizenship. Its policy of cultural citizenship is embedded in the notion of "democratic multiculturalism through the acknowledgment and expansion of cultural rights" (Kim and Oh 2012: 121). The challenge for Taiwan is to be able to promote a sense of cultural citizenship that does not follow the European model of encouraging cultural assimilation and integration but instead move towards a deeper sense of respect for diversity and tolerance of differences that corrects the historical injustices against minority groups including the so-called newcomer migrants.

> Unless Taiwan can develop an alternate cultural conceptualization that is inclusive, promoting cultural citizenship is not that different from either assimilation through education or Eurocentrism. This discrepancy may well be the reason why the policy is ineffective. Thus, the Taiwanese version of multiculturalism faces an internal contradiction when it comes to foreign migrants. Like the Hakkas and aborigines who continue to face ethnic discrimination, new migrants encounter prejudice and unfair treatment from their employers or families. (Kim and Oh 2012: 121)

Taiwan is said to be in the process of searching its true self, i.e., in search of a core identity that is not simply grounded on a sense of Chineseness – the result of its long and numerous historical and cultural shifts (Brown 2004, Wang and Liu 2004).

A survey by Wang and Liu (2004) found that 80 percent of adults in Taiwan look upon the island as their country and their fellow countrymen/women although around 66 percent felt that Taiwan culture is a part of Chinese culture. Their study shows that "Taiwan-centered national identities, including both Taiwanese nationalist identity and pro-Taiwan identity, are clearly dominant" (Wang and Liu 2004: 576, 578).

Identities are not fixed because individuals are tied to different groups at the same time (Harrell 1995).

> [N]arratives of unfolding are stories of the processes by which an ancient people has come down through the ages, as agent, as victim, as subject and object, but most importantly, as a unity… In replacing a history of negotiation with a narrative of unfolding, a government must make it look as if there is no choice but to be a loyal subject. (Harrell 1995: 4, 5)

Narratives of unfolding not only have the power to foster a more stable / fixed sense of belonging but must also to hide the fact that such attachments are constructed and socially, politically, and historically defined.

The paper draws insights from other experiences in promoting local citizenship. Local citizenship is established within sub-national political units. Local citizenship bears some resemblance to national citizenship in that both involve procedures for assigning status, rights, and privileges attendant to such membership (Bosniak 2006 and Villazor 2009). Yet there is a fundamental difference in that local citizenship operates (or is negotiated) within the local community and, as such, gives local authorities "a sense of autonomy and control over things that would have immediate effects on their lives" (Villazor 2009: 581). Moreover, unlike national citizenship which is determined either by birth or naturalization, local citizenship is determined by simple presence or residency in a particular space (Villazor 2009).

In Japan, for instance, some local governments have been offering immigrant services such as "employment and housing assistance, language programs, cross-cultural activities, education for immigrant children, healthcare and insurance, welfare benefits, and local political representation" as well as other immigrant integration programs and services and that local immigrant advocacy groups (including the foreigners themselves) have played a major role in bringing all of these about (Tsuda 2006: 6). This is what Tsuda (2006) refers to as local citizenship.

> Local citizenship refers to the granting, by local governments and organizations, of basic sociopolitical rights and services to immigrants as legitimate members of these local communities. (Tsuda 2006: 7)

Persons who are "non-Japanese" living in Japan are referred to collectively as *zainich* who can be of any nationality. As such, the term does not refer to a homogenous collective but rather refers to different nationalities existing in a single Japanese space although the term is popularly used to refer to Koreans living in Japan and can include both old-comers and new-comers (see Chapman 2008).

The immigration question in Japan has been fashioned initially within the discourse rubric of "internationalization" in the 1980s (Aiden 2011). By the 2000s the internationalization discourse eventually produced the idea of "multicultural coexistence" that was eventually applied towards foreign migrants or guest workers in Japan. While the use of the term multicultural coexistence may imply a degree of tolerance towards foreigners, it also has the potential of becoming the basis for a homogenization of Japanese society under "one ethnicity" – a theme that has been consistently played out in the Japanese policy discourse on immigration – thus revealing that multicultural coexistence is simply a metaphor for cultural assimilation of a single "Japaneseness" (see Chapman 2008).

The effect of these local initiatives is to provide an alternative as well as broaden the concept of citizenship even further in spite (or despite) the efforts of the Japanese national government to restrict immigration and be more restrictive in the exercise of citizenship naturalization regulations.

> Municipal governments in cities with large immigrant populations have generally been receptive, providing foreign workers with language classes and translation services, information handbooks and pamphlets, consultation services (for personal, legal, employment, and social welfare issues), public housing, health insurance and emergency medical coverage, assistance with alien registration, and even limited political representation through foreigner advisory councils. (Tsuda 2006: 20-21 citing Miyajima and Kajita1996 and Tegtmeyer Pak 2000)

Besides the local governments, there are also voluntary and faith-based organizations in Japan that assist foreigners (especially undocumented migrants) in Japan ranging from labor dispute settlement as well as resolving problems with abusive employers; providing information on how to access medical services and social insurance coverage; access to housing and education services; and even handling issues related to immigration status, apprehension, and detention (Tsuda 2006). Local governments and NGOs in Japan tend to have a mutually beneficial and supportive relationship with one another (Tsuda 2006).

The policy-making role of the local governments in Japan has been strengthened with the trend to decentralize governance culminating in the 2000 Omnibus Decentralization Act. The Act paved the way to empower local governments and encouraged them to engage more and more with policy initiatives.

> Local and national governments were placed on equal footing, with their respective roles and discretionary powers clarified. The system of agency delegated functions was abolished and a majority of these functions were transferred to local governments. Rules and process for central intervention in local matters were clarified, and in event of inter-governmental conflict, a central-local dispute resolving mechanism was put in place… [S]maller municipalities were encouraged to merge with the goal of expanding the capabilities of local governments that were to receive newly devolved powers. (Hijino 2017)

The Japanese local experience can provide a backdrop for the local narratives that are now playing out in the case of Taiwan.

At the level of the central government, Taiwan has a compartmentalized approach to immigration. The strategic perspective in Taiwan is to encourage more economic professionals to come by offering more incentives for them to stay and bring their families with them. Taiwan is also seeking to build a society that will allow for greater cultural diversity in order to overcome the communications problems that foreign spouses face and to make their stay as convenient and as comfortable as possible such as providing education assistance as well as counseling for new immigrant families and their children. Taiwan also recognizes the need to relax conditions for foreign students to come to Taiwan. Moreover, Taiwan also acknowledges the problem of human trafficking especially among matchmaking agencies.

Taiwan has set for itself the goal of creating a multicultural society with the following policy objectives:

> 1. To cultivate values of “respect for diversity” in our citizens, because, surely, appreciation of different cultures has a positive effect on our nation's cultural development which promotes social harmony.
> 2. To integrate government and private resources to help foreign spouses establish community groups to develop along their own lines, as continuations of their own native cultures.
> 3. To encourage various public and private bodies to organize new immigrant cultural activities, enhance awareness of the contribution that can be made by social and economic migrants, and increase interaction with foreign spouses and their families in order to create an environment friendly to marriage migrants. (White Paper 2013: 65)

The way that this goal is to be operationalized is by:

> [E]mphasizing structural changes in domestic society towards multiculturalism, enhancing multi-lingual communication in society through the media and the education system, and providing multicultural information on a social level, a daily living level and on an educational level, comprehensively affirming the contribution which different cultures have on our nation's social development of positive attitudes.

(White Paper 2013: 65).

The problem with this compartmentalized approach is that it does not fully recognize the complexity of the migration experience and the people that are moving. For instance, the objective of the White Paper to encourage the training of more nannies to provide a more conducive child care environment and eventually encourage (over the long-term) Taiwanese couples to have more children or providing better elderly care facilities can actually create (short-term) conditions for increasing the demand for foreign carersand domestic service providers as what has happened in Singapore and Hong Kong.

The bigger emphasis is on monitoring and managing flows of marriage migrants and preventing human trafficking. There is hardly any mention in the white paper of the growing demand for household caregivers and domestic helpers.

Background and Contexts

Population Decline and Migration in Taiwan

Taiwan has now become a migrant-receiving country (Wang 2011). Although the proportion of foreigners (in general) in Taiwan (around two percent) is nowhere near the proportions found elsewhere in the West and some parts of the Asia-Pacific (e.g., Malaysia and Singapore) and the Middle East (e.g., Qatar and Saudi Arabia), it is still important to understand the policy implications of such a development also from a demographic. Population and migration are deeply related to one another. Migration can be a driver for population change. More importantly, a country's population situation can be a driver for migration as in the case of Taiwan.

The economic miracle that occurred in Taiwan can be largely attributed to the economy's low labor cost and high labor supply surplus up to the 1980s. That situation has changed as Taiwan experienced a shortage in its domestic labor supply by the 1990s (Tsay 2015) due in no small part to its declining population growth rate. Indeed, the growth of Taiwan's population has been stagnant since the 1990s as shown in the figure below. Moreover, the population growth rate in Taiwan has actually been declining steadily since the 1960s (see figure below). Its age dependency ratios are approaching critical levels. Development planners in Taiwan have realized the serious implications population decline will have on Taiwan's (labor-dependent) economy and society as well as its overall competitive edge.

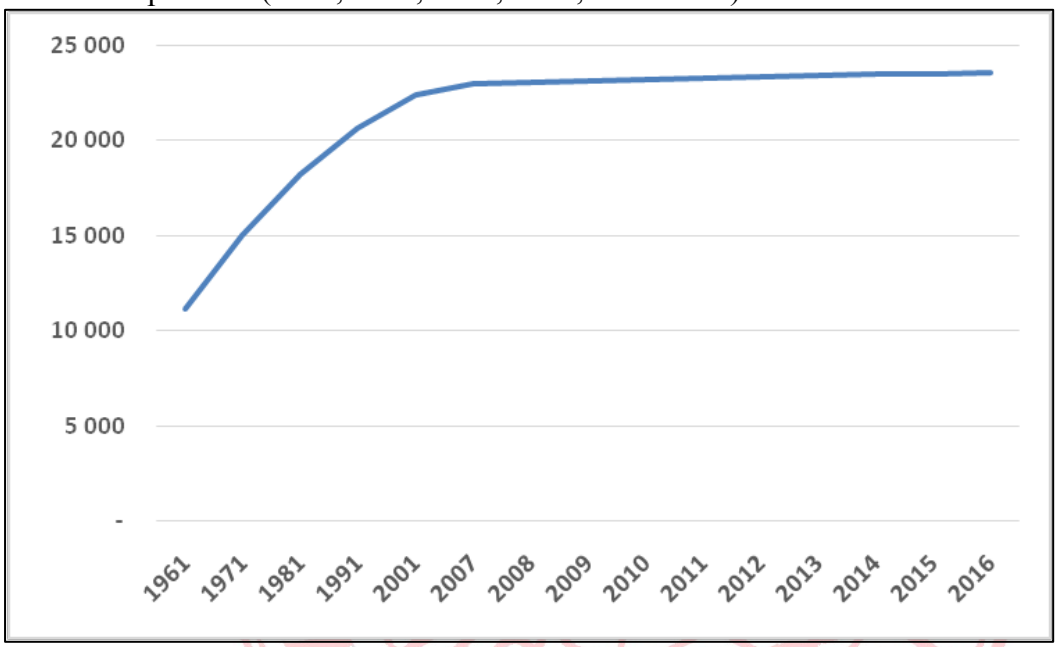
> A declining birth rate will result in a gradually shrinking job market and an aging labor force which includes the consumer market, education and the extent of parenting, taxation, manpower required for national defense, and so on. All these effects will, in turn, affect efforts to improve national competitiveness. (Executive Yuan 2013: 12)

Taiwan economic planners and policymakers look upon the domestic labor situation as being "intricately bound" to its population situation (Executive Yuan 2013: 1). Immigration has now come to play an important role in Taiwan as a way of easing the adverse effects and implications of a declining birth rate and also as a means to maintain its global economic competitiveness.

Taiwan's demographic situation has approached crisis proportions. Seeing the integral link between population and economic development and Taiwan's strategic interests, the Executive Yuan issued a Population Policy White Paper that formulated a comprehensive set of measures to address the population crisis that includes:

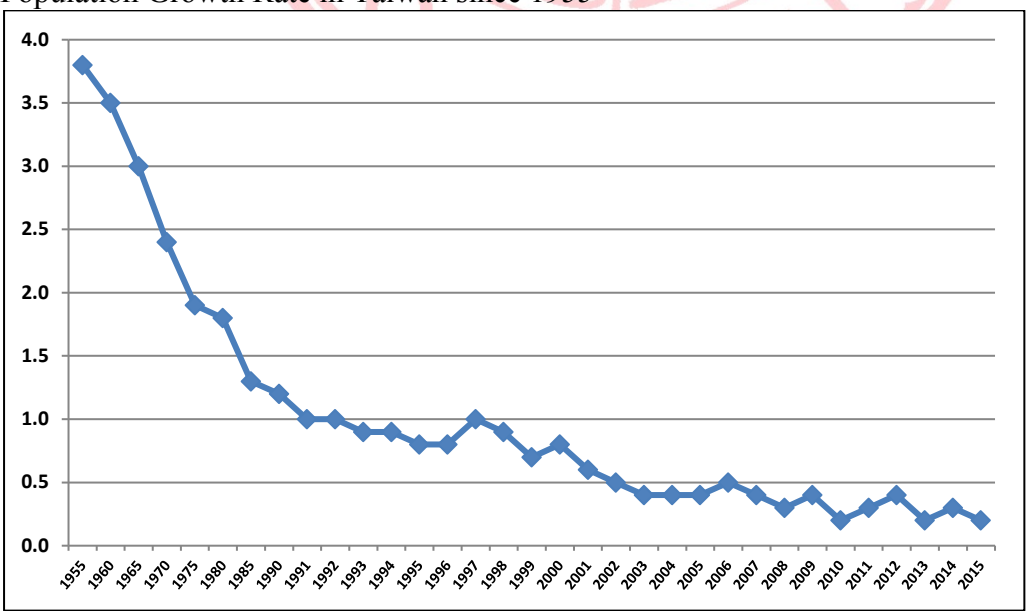
> [I]mproving marriage opportunities and rebuilding family values, the construction of a diverse, affordable, high-quality and accessible early childhood education system, the provision of economic support for parenting households, the creation of family-friendly workplace environments and the improvement of the reproductive health care system. (Executive Yuan 2013: i)

Taiwan Population (1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001-2016)



Source: Ministry of Interior

Population Growth Rate in Taiwan since 1955



Source: Ministry of Interior (MOI)

Taiwan's demographic problems have been exacerbated by the outflows of large segments of its young and talented workforce. A Legislative Yuan report showed a 10 percent increase in the talent outflows of Taiwanese from 2009 to 2016 (Yang 2018). In 2016, there were almost 730,000 Taiwanese who worked overseas most of them going to Mainland China and certain parts of Southeast Asia. These outflows of talent are seen to potentially jeopardize Taiwan's global competitiveness (see Yang 2018).

Foreign Workers from Southeast Asia

A significant portion of newcomers to Taiwan are from the countries of Southeast Asia. However, Southeast Asia is not entirely homogenous. Disparities in economic as well as demographic situations among the countries of Southeast Asia have acted as significant drivers of migration from the region as shown in the table below. Indonesia and the Philippines, for instance, have the two largest populations among the countries in Southeast Asia. While there are economies in the region that have attained high GDP per capita (Brunei, Indonesia Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand), there are also economies that are still faced with the problem of low GDP per capita (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, and Viet Nam). It is these disparities that also act as drivers for both out-migration and in-migration from and within Southeast Asia and beyond.

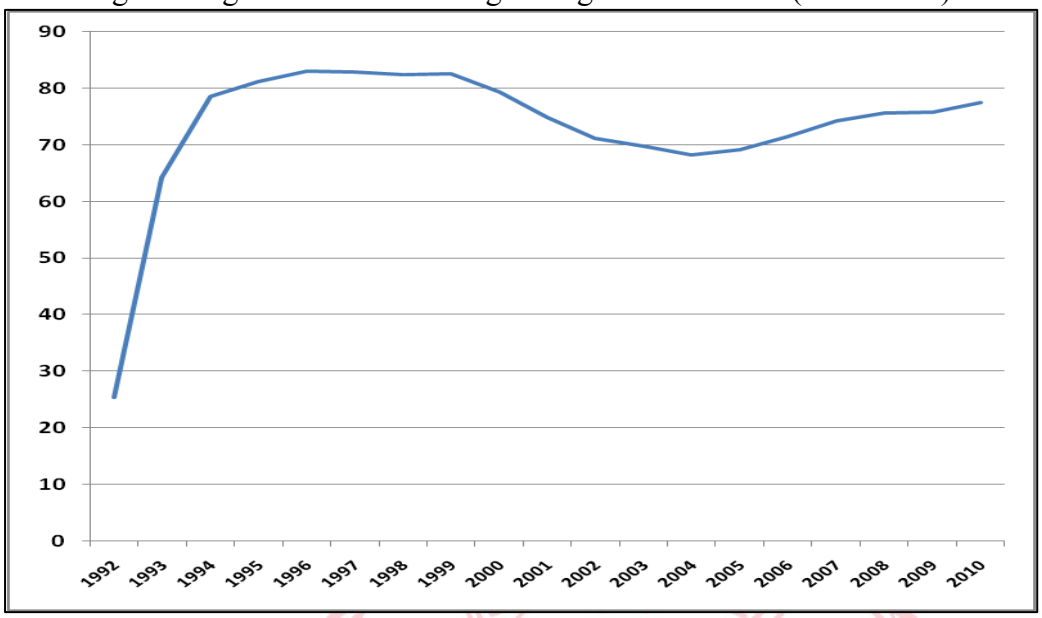
Southeast Asia Basic Indicators

Country	Total land area	Total population	Population density	Annual population growth	Gross domestic product at current prices	Gross domestic product per capita at current prices	
	km^2	thousand	persons per km^2	percent	US$ million	US$	US$ PPP
Brunei Darussalam	5,765	429.0	74	1.4	12,212	28,466	74,914
Cambodia	181,035	15,717.7	87	3.7	22,340	1,421	4,104
Indonesia	1,913,579	262,223.4	137	1.4	1,013,926	3,867	12,349
Lao PDR	236,800	6,752.8	29	2.0	17,090	2,531	7,332
Malaysia	331,388	32,049.7	97	1.2	317,042	9,892	29,236
Myanmar	676,576	53,397.8	79	0.9	65,607	1,229	6,070
Philippines	300,000	104,921.4	350	1.6	313,875	2,992	8,359
Singapore	719	5,612.3	7,804	0.1	323,954	57,722	93,920
Thailand	513,120	67,653.2	132	0.3	455,704	6,736	18,231
Viet Nam	331,231	93,682.4	283	1.1	223,927	2,390	7,027
ASEAN	**4,490,212**	**642,439.7**	**143**	**1.3**	**2,765,679**	**4,305**	**12,361**

Sources ASEAN Macro-economic Database, ASEAN Merchandise Trade Statistics Database, ASEAN Foreign Direct Investment Statistics Database (compiled/compu publications and/or websites of ASEAN Member States' national statistics offices, central banks and relevant government agencies, and from international sou https://data.aseanstats.org/indicator/AST.STC.TBL.1

The number of migrant workers as a proportion of the total number of foreigners in Taiwan has increased significantly since the 1990s as shown in the figure below. From comprising 25 percent of the total number of foreigners in Taiwan in 1992, the percentage of migrant workers in Taiwan has increased to over 75 percent by 2010.

Percentage of Migrant Workers among Foreigners in Taiwan (1992-2010)



Source: National Immigration Agency

There are currently around 650,000 foreign migrant workers in Taiwan. About 250,000 of them are caregivers and domestic workers. Caregivers and domestic workers in Taiwan are currently not covered by labor laws and standards. The migration flows between Southeast Asia and Taiwan might be described as a migration corridor. But while there are Taiwanese who go to Southeast Asia (mainly for investment purposes), it is the flow from Southeast Asia to Taiwan that is considered more important for both sending and source areas (Tsai 2015). The migration flow from Taiwan to Southeast Asia is There are roughly two categories of foreign residents in Taiwan: Chinese from overseas and non-Chinese foreign residents. Chinese foreigners are those from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and can include those PRC nationals married to Taiwanese as well as those Taiwanese who have become citizens of other countries. Non-Chinese foreign residents in Taiwan include migrant workers, other foreign spouses, and skilled workers or expatriates. The migrant worker category was officially introduced in 1991. Many foreigners in Taiwan are known as newcomers who arrived in the beginning of the 1990s mainly for purposes of temporary employment. A significant portion of these newcomer foreigners are from Southeast Asia.

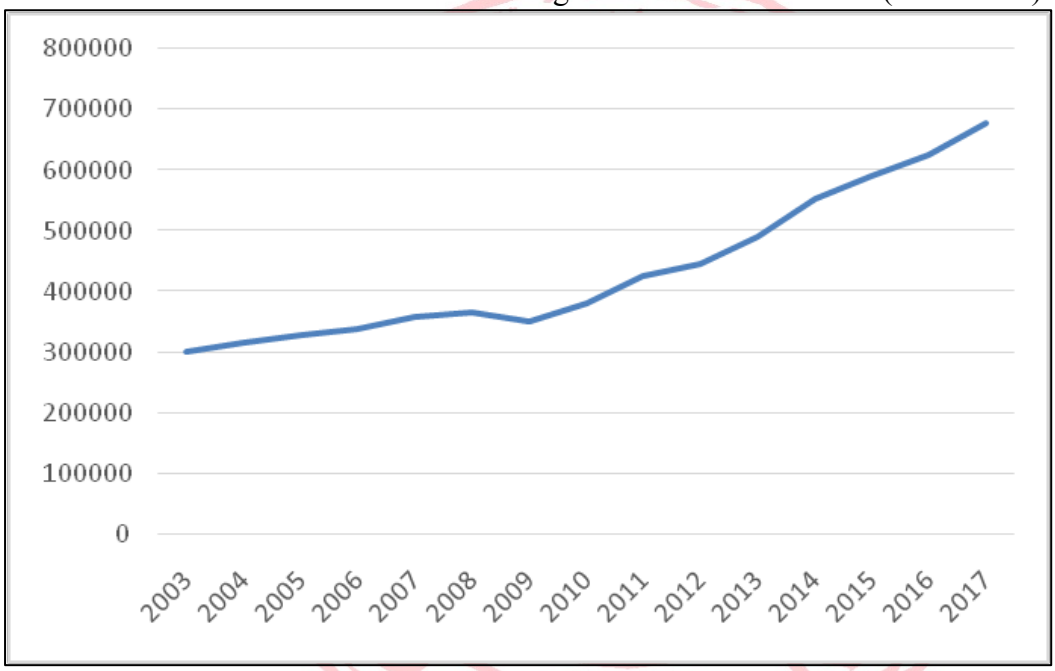
Foreign residents in Taiwan are further sub-divided into Economic Migrants, Non-Economic Migrants, and Foreign Manual Workers. Economic migrants are those recognized to be undertaking white-collar jobs or skilled professions (e.g., business investors, teachers, lawyers, doctors, missionaries, etc.). Migrants under this category are employed as expatriate professionals and managers. So-called non-economic migrants are those who are not gainfully employed and can include dependents of foreigners, foreign spouses, foreign students, and displaced persons. At present, female foreign spouses (many from Mainland China, Macau, and Southeast Asia) make up the largest category of non-economic migrants.

Foreign manual workers are those engaged in less-skilled factory or construction work as well as domestic care services. Many foreign manual workers come from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The demand for foreign manual workers has been increasing over the years due to Taiwan's ageing population and declining birth rates. In the 1990s, the demand was mainly for infrastructure construction projects but by the 2000s, the

demand had shifted towards caregivers and domestic helpers. Likewise, the demand for foreign factory workers has been consistently high in Taiwan.

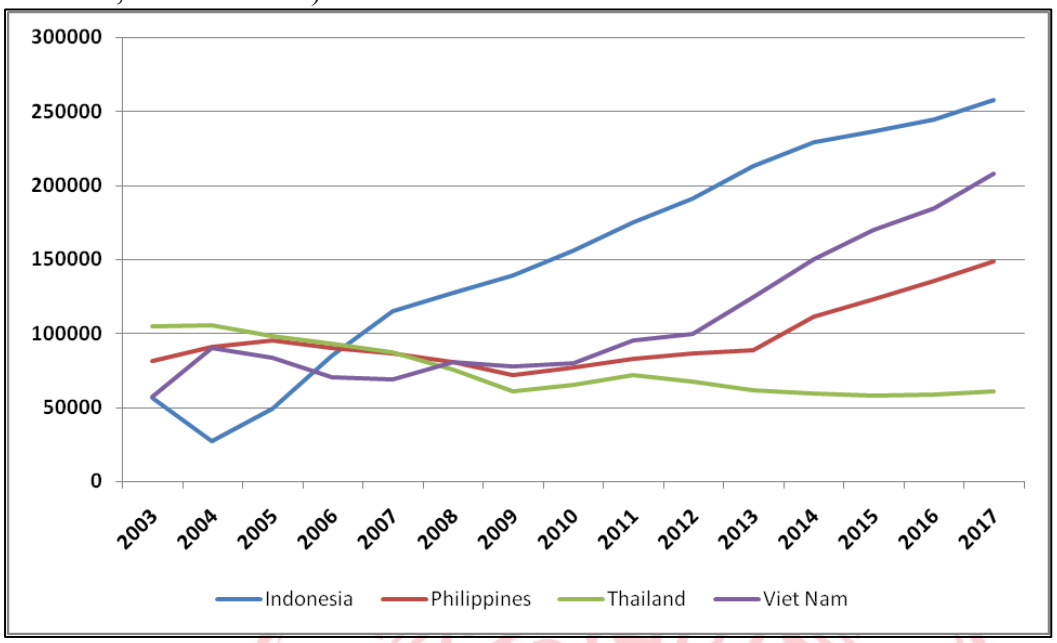
A significant portion of the foreign residents in Taiwan are migrant workers from Southeast Asia. During the 1990s, many Filipinos came to Taiwan to work. The figure below shows that the number of migrant workers from Southeast Asia has been increasing over the last 15 years. Since the early 2000s, however, the number of other Southeast Asian migrant workers going to Taiwan has increased steadily as shown in the figure below. The main sources of migrant workers from Southeast Asia are Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam (see figure below). Nearly all of the migrant workers from these countries are employed in manufacturing (primarily as factory workers) or in services (as domestic servants or caregivers) as shown in the figure below. In addition to migrant workers, spouses from Southeast Asia have also been quite significant reaching 140,000 by 2014 (Tsay 2015).

Total Annual Flows of Southeast Asian Migrant Workers to Taiwan (2003-2017)



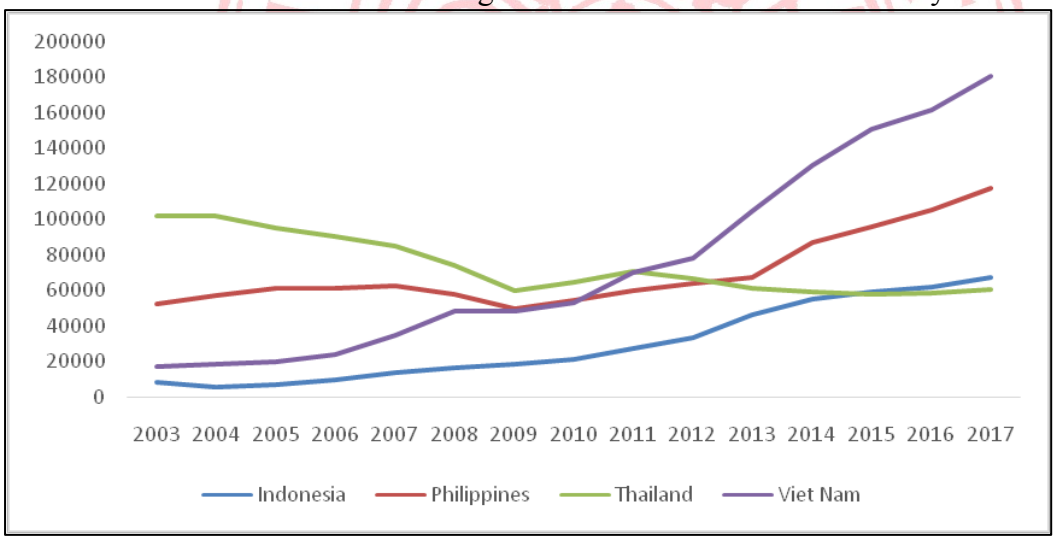
Source: Ministry of Labor (MOL)

Annual Flows of Southeast Asian Migrant Workers to Taiwan (Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam)



Source: Ministry of Labor (MOL)

Annual Flows of Southeast Asian Migrant Workers to Taiwan in Industry



Source: Ministry of Labor (MOL)

Local Governance Dynamics in Taiwan

Taiwan is in a unique position of being (a) briefly controlled or occupied by the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese in the 17th century; (b) inhabited by indigenous aboriginal groups (e.g., Pingpuzu and Gaoshanzu); (b) made a Japanese territory from 1895 to 1945; and (c) settled by Chinese (historically by Hoklos and Hakkas as well as the *waishengrenn* from the Chinese mainland since 1949) (see Kim and Oh 2012 and Brown 2004).

Taiwan has had a long tradition of domination by the central government (Chen and Lue 2010: 534). In 1987, however, martial law was lifted and with it were established basic

guarantees of civil and political rights such as freedom of the press and organization that became the watershed for other constitutional reforms to follow. In 1992, amendments were introduced to the constitution that attached much importance to the role that local governments played. Article 17 of the revisions of 1992 states the following:

> 1) There shall be a provincial assembly in each province and a county council in each county. Members of the provincial assembly and the county council shall be elected by the people of the province and the people of the county, respectively.
> 2) The legislative power of a province and that of a county shall be exercised by the provincial assembly and the county council, respectively.
> 3) In a province, there shall be a provincial government with a provincial governor. In a county, there shall be a county government with a county magistrate. The provincial governor and the county magistrate shall be elected by the people of the province and the people of the county, respectively.
> 4) The relationship between the province and the county. 5) The self-governance of provinces is subject to supervision by the Executive Yuan, while the self-governance of counties is subject to supervision by the provincial government. (Adopted by the extraordinary session of the Second National Assembly on May 27, 1992, and promulgated by the president on May 28, 1992)

Other reforms include the passage of the Local Self-Governance Act of Provinces and Counties of 1994 and the Local Self-Governance Law of Metropolitan Cities of 1994 as well as the Local Institutions Act of 1999 which not only allowed both central and local governments to cooperate but also granted the latter greater autonomy in the regulation of their own affairs (Chen and Lue 2010). All these reforms appear to be directed at solidifying Taiwan's identity as a sovereign entity. In 1998, the Provincial Government of Taiwan was suspended indefinitely. The rise of a two-party system in Taiwan made local governments more important in the electoral process.

> Because the KMT and DPP compete with each other in every election, both parties need grassroots electoral support. The bargaining power of local factions was thus strengthened. (Chen and Lue 2010: 543)

The numerous revisions and reforms made over the last two decades have resulted in the growing importance of local governments especially the special municipalities in determining the directions of the central government particularly the presidency (Lan 2018). Indeed, there has been a growing sentiment among key members of the central government that these reforms "ought to be guided by the spirit that the central government would not take over roles that would better be assumed by local governments" in order to develop strong central-local partnerships (Sun and Chiang 2008: 29).

Presently, Taiwan is made up of six special municipalities (Taipei, New Taipei, Taoyuan, Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung), 13 counties (Hsinchu, Miaoli, Changhua, Nantou, Yunlin, Chiayi, Pingtung, Yilan, Hualien, Taitung, Penghu, Kinmen, and Lienchiang) and three cities (Keelung, Hsinchu, and Chiayi). The current six special municipalities are the areas in Taiwan that have the highest population. The combined total population of the six special municipalities makes up around two-thirds of the overall population of Taiwan.

A special municipality is considered the highest political division in Taiwan and is directly under the central government. According to the 2009 amendments to the Local Government

Act, “cities and counties with a combined population of over 1.25 million and with special needs for regional development can apply to integrate and upgrade their status as special municipalities” (Ho 2009).

Each special municipality is headed by a mayor elected by popular vote for a four-year term. An elected mayor of a special municipality must serve no more than two consecutive terms. Each special municipality also has a municipal council (ranging from 57 to 66 members) are elected to four-year terms. The status of the special municipalities allows them to access more funds as well as a degree of administrative autonomy as a self-governing body.

Next to the special municipalities are the counties and cities in Taiwan. Each county and city is headed by a magistrate and mayor, respectively, supervising the general affairs of the community. Both county magistrates and city mayors are elected and serve a term of four years. Aside from the magistrates and mayors, counties and cities also have county and city councils whose members are elected as well.

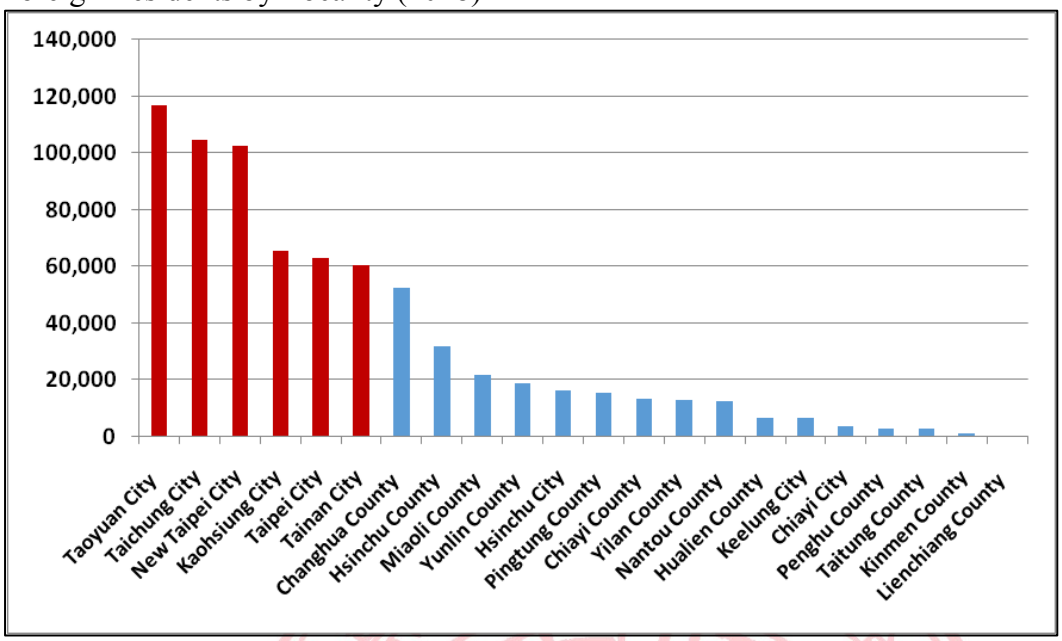
Local elections in Taiwan have been taking place since the 1950s (Wu and Huang 2007 and Tan, et al. 1996). Such electoral exercises were limited to the local levels since holding national elections would have been challenging and contentious for the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) party particularly during the first few decades (Wu and Huang 2007). Due to the peculiar situation of Taiwan in relation to the government on the Mainland, elections for central government officials have been greatly proscribed. Over the last three decades, however, Taiwan had undergone a kind of “controlled” political liberalization and relaxation that culminated in the lifting of martial rule in 1987 and the holding of elections at both local and central levels in 1996 (Wu and Huang 2007). Up to the elections of 1985, the KMT controlled a vast majority of local governments throughout Taiwan in terms of mayors, magistrates, and local council members. During this period, elections have been described as largely directed at controlling and co-opting local elites (Winckler 1984).

The establishment of all the six special municipalities by 2014 was seen as the beginning of a new era in Taiwan local political development since all six of their mayors would now be able to wield a strong political influence on the central government “because each of them was directly voted into office by approximately two million people” Wang and Yeh 2013: 137).

Foreign Residents in Localities

Foreigners can be found in all the local communities throughout Taiwan. But of the total number of foreign residents in Taiwan as of July 2018, around 70 percent are located in the six special municipalities as shown in the figure below.

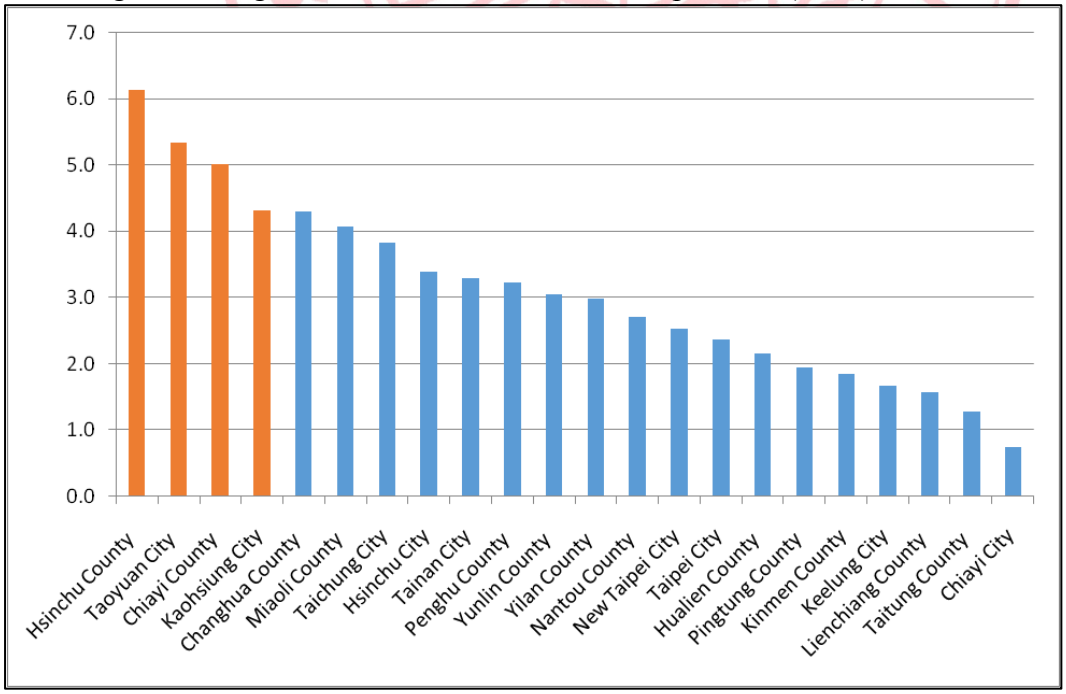
Foreign Residents by Locality (2018)



Source: National Immigration Agency (NIA)

However, if the number of foreigners (as of 2018) as a percentage of total local resident population (as of the 2010 census) is computed as shown in the figure below, the trend would show that certain local communities are affected by foreigners more than others. Hsinchu County, for instance has the highest percentage of foreigners (6 percent) in all the local communities in Taiwan followed only by Taoyuan City (5.3 percent).

Percentage of Foreigners to Total Local Resident Population (2018)

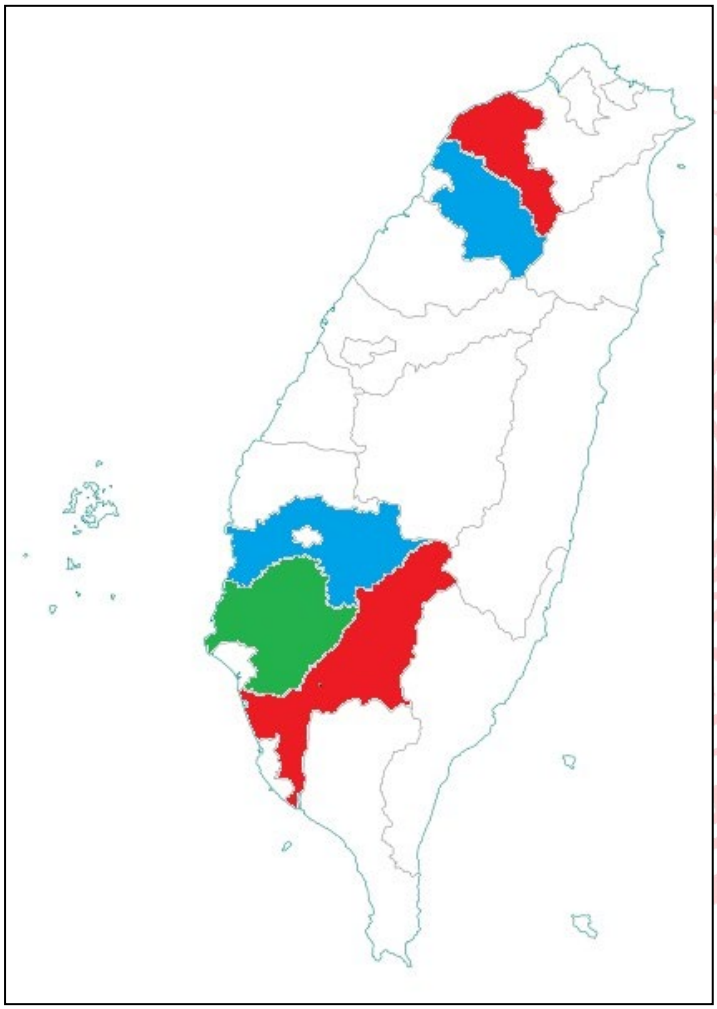


Source: NIA and National Statistics

The Local Cases

As mentioned above, four case sites were identified – Hsinchu County and Taoyuan City in the north and Chiayi County and Kaohsiung City in the southern part of Taiwan. These case sites involve two special municipalities and two counties located in both the northern and southern parts of Taiwan (see figure below). As seen in the above figure, all four of these localities have the highest percentage of foreign residents. A special case is made for Tainan City given its peculiar local initiative of making English its second official language as will be discussed in the next section.

Location of Local Case Sites



Source: Wikipedia at
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Taiwan_political_division_svg_map_(blank).svg

As pointed out earlier, the four case sites have the highest percentage of foreigners among all the localities in Taiwan including special municipalities. The higher percentage would indicate a more noticeable presence of foreigners that can impact on the programs of the local government as well as the perspectives of local residents.

Taoyuan City

Taoyuan city is an industrial locality in northwestern Taiwan. The current mayor of the city government is Cheng Wen-Tsan from the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). Apart from the international airport, Taouyuan also has around 10,000 factories and other companies mostly involved in the high-technology sector. As such, it is not surprising that Taoyuan city has a high percentage of migrant workers. Nearly all of the migrant workers in Taoyuan come from four Southeast Asian countries - Viet Nam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. Around 20 percent of the migrant workers in Taoyuan are engaged in domestic or elderly care work.

There has emerged in Taoyuan a kind of division of labor in which certain types of migrants are preferred by certain sectors. High technology industries prefer Filipino workers (in which their English proficiency is seen as an advantage). The more traditional factories prefer workers from Thailand while households prefer migrants from Viet Nam and Indonesia.

Given the high number of migrant workers, it is not surprising for labor disputes to arise. The city government has undertaken measures to address these by way of hiring foreign translators as full-time staff. The local government follows the guidelines of the central government and maintains a hotline system (1955) for foreign workers to call in case they need assistance. The local government also inspects and investigates work conditions in factories for any violations of labor laws and regulations including imposition of penalties and fines against employers who hire illegal migrants. Taoyuan has the lowest crime rate involving foreigners in Taiwan.

The local government of Taoyuan also cooperates with civil society organizations (CSOs). Regular meetings and consultations are also conducted between CSOs and the local government pertaining to the welfare of migrant workers in the communities.

From the perspective of the local government of Taoyuan, the central government sets the regulations on migrant workers and the local governments simply implement these. The city government, however, is able to take the initiative when it comes to responding to the immediate needs and concerns of migrants such as initiating investigations in the aftermath of a dormitory fire that resulted in the deaths of several migrant workers.

Chiayi County

Chiayi County has a population of around half a million located in the southwestern part of Taiwan. It is primarily an agricultural area faced with an ageing population. The current magistrate is Chang Hwa-Kwan also from the DPP. Given these problems, there has emerged a huge demand for agricultural workers from abroad.

Chiayi County is faced with the problem of a declining and ageing population. Chiayi is the most aged county in Taiwan (Yang Jan-Jen and Chiu Yi-Wen, personal communication, Taibao City, 2 April 2018). The county also has the second-lowest birth rate (5.89) in Taiwan next only to Keelung and much lower than the national average (8.91) in 2013 (Tsai, et al. 2014). The declining birth rate over the years has also adversely affected the local schools. In 2014, the county government reportedly had 30 schools with only less than 50 students each (Tsai, et al. 2014).

It used to be that employers see foreigners differently. They are usually found in so-called 3D jobs that local people do not want to do and receive lower wages than locals (Yang Jan-Jen and Chiu Yi-Wen, personal communication, Taibao City, 2 April 2018).

Nowadays, migrant workers play a more significant role in local households in Chiayi mostly as carers for the elderly. They are more integrated with the local people (Yang Jan-Jen and Chiu Yi-Wen, personal communication, Taibao City, 2 April 2018). The local government also provides cultural activities and festivals for foreigners to appreciate such as having an Islamic exhibition. English translation is also provided by the local government to foreign migrants as well as foreign spouses. Some elderly people are said to have asked their sons to marry foreigners (Yang Jan-Jen and Chiu Yi-Wen, personal communication, Taibao City, 2 April 2018). Almost all the assistance provided to foreigners is given by the local government.

Kaohsiung City

Kaohsiung City is a special municipality located in the southwestern part of Taiwan. The current mayor of Kaohsiung is Hsu Li-ming who succeeded Chen Chu in April 2018 who was mayor since 2006. Both are from the DPP.

Kaohsiung is the third most populous city in Taiwan with a population of nearly three million. It is also Taiwan's largest municipality by area. Kaohsiung is an industrial area. It has the largest port in Taiwan. Kaohsiung has around 65,000 foreign residents. A substantial number of these are migrant workers including fishermen from Southeast Asia.

Kaohsiung is also the location of the Office of the Southern Administration Corps of the National Immigration Agency (NIA) headed by Dr. Wayne Hsieh, General Commander, and established in 2007. The Southern Administration Corps provides support and assistance to local governments in dealing with the problems of foreigners in their localities. The office sends assorted literature and training materials to deal with the problems of foreign spouses, fishermen, and other migrant workers. They have good relations with the labor bureau of the Kaohsiung city government (Dennis Lo, et al., personal communication, Kaohsiung city, 26 April 2018).

Hsinchu County

Hsinchu County is located in the northwestern part of Taiwan. Hsinchu County is headed by Chiu Ching-chun from Kuomintang (KMT). It currently has a population of around 547,000 and a foreign resident population of nearly 32,000 making it the highest percentage of foreigners in Taiwan. The local population is primarily composed of Hakka Chinese. It is largely an upland agricultural area.

The foreign residents in Hsinchu county are composed mostly of new immigrants, particularly foreign spouses. Around 18,000 of the foreign residents in Hsinchu county are women.

Comparison of Websites

A comparison of the websites of the four local governments would show some similarities and differences in their content (see table below). All of the websites have an English language version. The Taoyuan and Kaohsiung English websites contain information about

living in the city while the Hsinchu and Chiayi websites contain mostly information on tourist sites in their localities. All four websites provide a directory of local government offices. The Taoyuan and Kaohsiung websites provide a 1999 hotline number while the Hsinchu and Chiayi websites do not contain such hotline information.

Local Government Website Comparisons

	Taoyuan	**Kaohsiung**	**Hsinchu**	**Chiayi**
URL	https://www.tycg.gov.tw/eng/	https://www.kcg.gov.tw/EN/	https://www.hsinchu.gov.tw/en/	https://www.cyhg.gov.tw/en/
Administrative Status	Special Municipality	Special Municipality	County	County
Total Foreigners (2018)	116,754	65,282	31,977	13,399
% Foreigners	5.3	4.3	6.1	5.0
Local Chief Executive	Cheng Wen-tsan (DPP)	Chen Chu (DPP)	Chiu Ching-chun (KMT)	Chang Hwa-Kuan (DPP)
Website language/s	Chinese, English	Chinese, English	Chinese, English	Chinese, English, Japanese
English button at top of page	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Living Guides, etc. in English	Yes	Yes	Tourist spots	Tourist spots
Policies and Program	Yes	Yes	Governance Philosophy	Yes
Directory / Contact Information	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Links to National Agencies	NIA, MOFA, Taiwan Today, Invest Taiwan	--	Executive Yuan, NIA, Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Interior	Executive Yuan, Taiwan Today News, Taiwan Cultural Portal, MOFA Working Holiday Program
1999 Service Hotlines	Yes	Yes	--	--
Contact Us Page	Contact Details	Yes	--	Per Agency but not working

Tainan's English Language Special Initiative

Tainan City is a special municipality located in the southwestern part of Taiwan. Its current mayor is Li Men-yen who assumed the position after the mayor, Lai Ching-te, was appointed as Premier in September 2017. The former mayor Mr. Lai is affiliated with the DPP and has been touted to be a strong contender for the presidency (Chow 2017b).

Tainan has a total population of around 1.8 million and a foreign resident population of around 60,000. While the percentage of foreigners in Taiwan is not that high (3.3 percent), it still deserves special mention given the unique initiative it has undertaken. In an effort to broaden and consolidate the support for making Taiwan more globalized, the Tainan city government has taken the official initiative to encourage the use of English not only among

the local inhabitants but also among the local officials. Such an initiative can be seen as a way for the city government to also become more foreigner-friendly.

Local government documents and announcements are now also made available in English. Tainan also plans to get more children exposed to English. Tainan is said to be spearheading this effort for other large cities in Taiwan (Based on Linghu Tien, Melody Chen, Flomo Shen. Personal communications. 3 and 13 April 2018). The aim of the Tainan program is to lay the foundation for the establishment of English proficiency in the city by 2018 and to become fully bilingual by 2025 (Lee and Yang 2018).

Tainan is a city located in the southwestern part of Taiwan. It is the oldest city in Taiwan. In 2010 Tainan County and Tainan City were merged to form a special municipality. Tainan has around 60,000 foreign residents comprising around 3.2 percent of the city's total population (or around 1.9 million) in 2017.

In an effort to broaden and consolidate the support for making Taiwan more globally open and connected, the Tainan city government has taken the official initiative to encourage the use of English not only among the local inhabitants but also among its local officials. Such an initiative can be seen as a way for the city government to also become more foreigner-friendly. Local government documents and announcements are now also made available in English. Tainan also plans to teach more children in the local communities English.

Tainan is spearheading this effort for other large cities in Taiwan. The immediate aim of the Tainan program is to lay the foundation for the establishment of English proficiency in the city by 2018 and, over the medium-term, to become fully bilingual by 2025 (Lee and Yang 2018).

In 2015, the Tainan city government established an Office of English as a Second Official Language (OEASOL) – the only one of its kind in the country (Lee and Yang 2018). Tainan even has its own Office of English as a Second Official Language with its own website (http://oeasol.tainan.gov.tw2).

Linghu Tien, deputy director of OEASOL, points out that the English initiative is "not meant to turn everyone into English speakers, but rather build is more of a bottom-up consensus that the language is important, useful, and easy to practice in daily conversation" (Lee and Yang 2018). Legislator Rosalia Wu also argues that "English proficiency is vital to promoting Taiwan's internationalization" and that not knowing to use English is making it difficult for Taiwanese to take part in international deliberations (Shih 2018).

Certainly, the English language environment will attract more foreigners to come and spend their money (Flomo Shen. Personal communication. 13 April 2018). Shen also points out that it is not enough to speak good English but also to develop a "good character" and not be afraid of foreigners (Personal communication. 13 April 2018).

There are those who are skeptical about the initiative notably among experts and scholars who argue that English proficiency cannot be legislated (Yeh 2018). Objections have been raised by some from pro-democracy and pro-independence groups who fear that the popularity of English would only undermine the use of the local indigenous Taiwanese language and identity (Flomo Shen. Personal communication. 13 April 2018; Chow 2017a; and Shih 2018). Pro-unification groups are also against the policy because they fear that

learning English will distance Taiwan from China even more (Shen 2018). Others simply think that learning English is too difficult already and that the environment is not good for learning English such as in the Philippines or Europe (Flomo Shen. Personal communication. 13 April 2018).

The initiative has also been described as being “like New Year's Eve fireworks, which are beautiful, but illusory,” according to Assoc. Prof. Hugo Tseng of Soochow University (Lee and Yang 2018). It could also widen the disparities in resources between rural (underprivileged) and urban schools as well as impose an added strain on schoolchildren according to Prof. Chang Wu-chang of Ming Chuan University (Yeh 2018).

However, there are those who believe the English language policy will bring more benefits for the city and for the whole of Taiwan (Shen 2018). In a world that is becoming more and more interconnected and interdependent, "those who speak more languages will have more advantages" (Flomo Shen. Personal communication. 13 April 2018).

Prof. Chen Chao-ming of Shih Chien University argues that for such a policy to succeed “the government must view English not as an education in which one memorises grammar and vocabulary, but a way of life” (Chow 2017a). The promotion of English will ensure Taiwan’s global competitiveness over the long-term. Chen points out that English proficiency will be a great asset for Taiwan (Yang and Hsu 2015). Moreover, Taiwan’s Minister of Education points out that as more and more young Taiwanese become familiar with and proficient in English, they would “have more opportunities to explore and connect with the world” (Chen, et al. 2018).

The Tainan experiment offers observers a glimpse of what challenges await other local governments as well as the central government in undertaking this shift towards greater English language proficiency. One challenge is the availability of enough instructors with English proficiency to teach the language and another challenge is how to make resources (e.g. websites, documents, signs, forms, etc.) available in both Chinese and English given that there is little incentive for private firms to do so (Chen, et al. 2018).

In an effort to make its local governance system more inclusive (particularly for foreigners), the city government of Tainan began in 2016 a plan to translate all local ordinances into English. This makes Tainan the first city government in Taiwan to make English translations of its local ordinances available. Thus far, 15 ordinances have been translated particularly those that have a significant impact on foreign residents such as the Self-Government Ordinance for Food Safety Management; on Suicide Reporting and Care; Sanitary Control of Business Operations; for Public Car Park Fee Collection and Management and for Dealing with Vehicles Obstructing Traffic; for the Regulation of Arts and Culture Groups; for Environmental Cleaning; and for Consumer Protection (Tainan City Government 2017).

The Tainan government initiative is supported in large part by the FLOMO Education Foundation (see Shen 2018 and Tien and Chen 2018). Learning English is beneficial to everyone. As the founder of FLOMO Foundation would put it: “In the internationalized world, if you speak English you will have more opportunities” (Shen 2018).

Conclusions

In general, te treatment and attitude towards foreigners in East Asia, including Taiwan, can be seen as bifurcated. On the one hand, there are the white Westerners (typically seen as native-English speakers) who enjoy a more privileged position in society relative to other foreign nationalities. On the other hand, there are those migrants coming from Southeast Asia and other non-Western countries who are seen as belonging to a lower status in society.

> In East Asia, white and English-speaking migrants enjoy higher social status while the cultural or linguistic assimilation of migrants who are not English speakers is rather problematic. (Kim and Oh 2012: 117)

The narrative among policy makers in East Asia seems to emphasize the need for foreigners to learn to adapt to the host society and considers "multiculturalism and cultural assimilation as two sides of the same coin" (Kim and Oh 2012: 118). Education (specifically towards learning the dominant local language) provides the foundation through which "non-English speaking, non-white migrants" can be assimilated into the mainstream host society (Kim and Oh 2012: 118).

The multicultural policy narrative in East Asia is one that still privileges white English-speaking migrants over all other migrants.

> Since non-white and non-English-speaking migrants gain little in their attempts at assimilation, these new migrants are not motivated to learn the host country's culture and language, especially when English is more advantageous in these three societies. (Kim and Oh 2012: 121)

As Taiwan embarked on its journey to democratize its society, the ideology of cultural homogeneity would eventually give way to promoting multiculturalism and cultural diversity and the recognition that Taiwan is composed of many different cultures that actually serve to enrich the society. Moreover, the multicultural discourse raised serious questions about the notion of Taiwanese identity especially beginning in the post-Cold War period and the lifting of Martial Law in 1987.

Political groups in Taiwan have now taken seriously the new situation that the country has found itself in. For instance, the KMT plans to nominate new immigrants for local councils in the six special municipalities for the November 2018 elections (Hsu 2017)

Migrant workers were officially allowed in 1991. On the one hand, the less-skilled migrants are only allowed to stay temporarily and are not allowed to bring their families with them (Wang 2011). On the other hand, skilled workers are entitled to apply for permanent residency after a certain number of years of working and living in Taiwan. Declining birthrates and an ageing population are two of Taiwan's major challenges to its economic competitiveness (Wang 2011). Taiwan has also been experiencing a shortage of domestic labor (Wang 2011) due in part to the initiatives of Mainland China to attract Taiwan's young and talented workforce.

To cope with the demographic challenges, Taiwan adopted the "supplementary" policy to import migrant workers mostly from nearby Southeast Asian countries (Wang 2011: 180). This meant that migrant workers were only allowed to stay in Taiwan for a limited period of time after which they had to return to their home countries. In the beginning, their stay was restricted to three years but in 2000 this was increased to six years and later to nine years by

2007 (Wang 2011). Interestingly, this situation had created a strong dependence on unskilled foreign labor over the long-term (Wang 2011).

Foreign spouses are also seen as a way for Taiwan to address the birth rate problem. Wang (2011) observes that "without the immigrants, the number of newly-born babies in Taiwan will be about 10 percent less than the current level" (Wang 2011: 178). An ageing population has led a growing number of Taiwanese households to hire foreign caregivers for the elderly.

Taiwan also placed an emphasis on the "quality" of foreigners that it admits putting more importance on skilled foreigners over those foreign migrants doing less-skilled or menial jobs (Wang 2011).

> It seems that the importation of domestic workers or caregivers for the elderly is the strategy employed by middle class families, while marrying a foreign woman is the strategy among lower income families to deal with the care crisis. (Wang 2011: 187)

Local initiatives show some signs of greater openness towards foreigners. This is the case in the Tainan city government's English language initiative. Interestingly, shortly after assuming his new office, Premier Lai directed the Ministry of Education to do a feasibility study on making English a second official language for the whole of Taiwan (Shih 2018).

The central government's White Paper (2013) recommends that the Ministry of Interior (MoI) conduct surveys on immigrant population's conditions. It is not clear whether local governments are also involved in the conduct of such surveys or if they make use of the findings.

An examination of the local cases would seem to show that initiatives of the central government still play a dominant role in local government programs and other official undertakings with certain exceptions. Such a trend is likely to change as the local governments become more aware of their strengths and capacities to deal with the issue of immigration at their levels. The long-standing domination of the central government may soon be weakened as more local governments (especially the special municipalities) begin to flex their muscles and initiate their respective local programs.

Likewise, it remains to be seen whether the New Southbound Policy of the central government can be used by local governments to promote programs towards greater accommodation of foreigners. This is to be expected given that the New Southbound Policy has only recently become a commitment of the central government and has yet to trickle down to the local levels.

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