

Taiwan



Taiwan is the island which has for all practical purposes been independent for half a century but which China describes as a renegade province that must be re-united with the mainland. It is one of Asia's big traders, yet has been diplomatically isolated since the 1970s. China insists that no country can have formal ties with both mainland China and Taiwan.

TAIWAN FACTS

Population: 22.5 million (government statistic, 2002)

Capital: Taipei

Major language: Standard Chinese, Taiwanese

Major religions: Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity

Life expectancy: 72 years (men), 78 years (women) (government statistics)

Monetary unit: 1 New Taiwan dollar (NT\$) = 100 cents

Main exports: Computer equipment, textiles, basic metals, equipment, plastic and rubber products, vehicles

Average annual income: US \$12,900 (government statistic, 2002)

Internet domain: .tw

International dialling code: +886

The media environment in Taiwan is among the freest in Asia, and extremely competitive. There are about 350 newspapers, all privately-owned and reflecting a wide range of views.



Flag description: A blue-violet rectangle with a shining sun in the center; red background. For a timeline of key events go to http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1286033.stm