

Contents

# The Republic of China Yearbook

Reviewed from the Publisher

Editorial Staff and Major Contributors

General Contents

Foreword

1. Introduction

2. The Republic

3. The People

4. The Economy

5. Society

6. Culture

7. Education

8. Science

9. Geography

10. Environment: Environmental Quality, Environmental Policy, Environmental Law, Environmental Impact Assessment, and the Green Building Strategy as an Effective Building Strategy

11. Urban-Rural Disparities: Urban-Rural Disparities in Economic Growth, Income Distribution, and Infrastructure Development

12. Economic Policy: Economic Policy, Economic Growth, and Economic Development

13. Foreign Relations: Foreign Relations, International Law, and International Organizations

14. The Judiciary: The Judiciary, Judicial Review, and the Rule of Law

15. Economic and Financial: Economic and Financial, Monetary Policy, and Financial Markets

16. International: International, International Law, and International Organizations

17. Public Health: Public Health, Health Policy, and Health Services

18. Labor Policy: Labor Policy, Labor Law, and Labor Unions

19. Education: Education, Educational Policy, and Educational Institutions

20. Science and Technology: Science and Technology, Technological Innovation, and Technological Policy

**Taiwan 2002**

# The Republic of China Yearbook

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Beginning in 2001, the print editions of *The Republic of China Yearbook* and *Who's Who in the Republic of China*, which were formerly published together as a single volume, were split into two separate books. *The Republic of China Yearbook—Taiwan 2002* alone is available in both hardcover and paperback formats:

Hardcover: NT\$950 US\$35  
Paperback: NT\$550 US\$20

*Who's Who in the Republic of China—Taiwan 2002*, which is only available in paperback, can be ordered by adding an additional NT\$250 (US\$10) to the above prices.

The CD-ROM version continues to contain both publications and is available for NT\$600 (US\$20).

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Cover: Scenic Sun Moon Lake is again ready to welcome tourists after reconstruction following the September 21, 1999 earthquake. (Photo by Chen Chih-ming 陳志明, courtesy of the Sun Moon Lake National Scenic Area Administration, Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications )

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# Contents

## Foreword from the Publisher

## Editorial Staff and Major Contributors

National Symbols ..... 1

### Biographies

Sun Yat-sen ..... 4  
Chen Shui-bian ..... 5  
Lu Hsiu-lien ..... 6  
Yu Shyi-kun ..... 7

1. Geography ..... 9  
2. People ..... 21  
3. Language ..... 33  
4. History ..... 45  
5. Government ..... 57  
6. Democratic Electoral System ..... 83  
7. Cross-Strait Relations ..... 99  
8. National Defense ..... 115  
9. Foreign Relations ..... 125  
10. The Economy ..... 145  
11. Finance and Banking ..... 167  
12. Agriculture ..... 181  
13. Environmental Protection ..... 191  
14. Transportation ..... 215  
15. Public Health ..... 237  
16. Mass Media ..... 267  
17. Education ..... 287  
18. Science and Technology ..... 307

Contents

19. Social Welfare .....	321
20. Labor .....	339
21. The Arts .....	349
22. Tourism .....	381
23. Sports and Recreation .....	397
24. Literature .....	413
25. Religion .....	451
<b>Appendices</b> .....	473
I. ROC Chronology: January 1911–December 2001 .....	475
II. The History of the ROC Before 1949 .....	513
III. The Constitution of the Republic of China and the Additional Articles .....	524
IV. ROC Government Directory .....	541
V. Directory of ROC Representatives Abroad .....	550
VI. Directory of Foreign Embassies and Representatives in the ROC .....	563
VII. Weights and Measures in Use in the ROC .....	570
VIII. National Holidays and Festivals in the ROC .....	571
IX. A Comparison of Various Chinese Romanization Systems .....	576
<b>Index of Charts, Maps, and Tables</b> .....	583
<b>Index</b> .....	589
11. Agriculture .....	11
12. Environmental Protection .....	12
13. Transportation .....	13
14. Public Health .....	14
15. Social Welfare .....	15
16. Education .....	16
17. Science and Technology .....	17

# Foreword from the Publisher

Over the past year, the Republic of China experienced major domestic and international political and economic challenges. The world economic downturn, which began in the second half of 2000, continued to adversely affect Taiwan's export industry, particularly the high-tech sector. Nonetheless, significant accomplishments were made in cross-strait and foreign relations, as well as democratization.

The complex relationship with the Chinese mainland was considerably enhanced at the very beginning of the year 2001, when the "Three Small Links" (direct trade, postal, and transportation) between the ROC's offshore islands Kinmen and Matsu and the Chinese mainland coastal cities of Xiamen and Fuzhou in Fujian were formally established on January 1. The expansion of direct social and economic ties will encourage both sides of the Taiwan Strait to seek peaceful and mutually beneficial solutions to their political differences.

Early in the year, the controversy surrounding the cabinet's decision to terminate the construction of the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant was settled by the Council of Grand Justices. On February 14, the premier announced the resumption of construction, thus reassuring industrialists, who had expressed concern over the future adequacy of Taiwan's electric power supply.

Two thousand one was a year of numerous accomplishments in foreign affairs. Heads of state, premiers, and other eminent leaders from the ROC's diplomatic partners and other friendly nations visited Taipei for high-level discussions.

President Chen began a 16-day state visit on May 21 to Latin America, with transit stops in Houston and New York. This trip was extremely important in solidifying relations with Latin American nations and upgrading substantive relations with the United States. Premier Chang Chun-hsiung also represented the ROC abroad by visiting four of the ROC's Caribbean allies in September.

Vice President Lu's state visit to The Gambia for the inauguration of President Yahya Jammeh in December was instrumental in strengthening relations with the ROC's African partner. In addition, Vice President Lu sponsored the 2001 Global Peace Assembly attended by five Nobel

Peace Prize recipients and representatives from major international NGOs in August.

For their outstanding efforts, President Chen and Vice President Lu were both honored with prestigious international awards in 2001. On November 6, President Chen received the "2001 Prize for Freedom" from the London-based Liberal International, with First Lady Wu Shu-jen accepting the prize in France on his behalf. Then, on December 9, Vice President Lu received the World Peace Prize for her dedication to human rights, democracy, and peace.

In August, President Chen convened the Economic Development Advisory Conference (EDAC), composed of leaders from all sectors of society, to identify methods of promoting sustainable economic development at a time of worldwide recession. The month-long conference yielded 322 items of consensus for reform, including 36 recommendations for developing closer economic ties with the mainland.

After years of negotiations with other World Trade Organization (WTO) members, the ROC finally gained approval for accession on November 11 at the WTO 4th Ministerial Meeting in Doha, Qatar. WTO membership will bring many new challenges to Taiwan's economy, but the expected benefits will outweigh the difficulties in the long term.

Democratic development was uniquely elevated with the December 1, 2001, Legislative Yuan election. For the first time, the DPP became the largest political party in the legislature with 87 of the 225 seats, giving President Chen additional political authority to form a DPP-led cabinet.

These and other major events and trends are all covered in *The Republic of China Yearbook—Taiwan 2002*. With objective facts and accurate figures, the 2002 edition of the yearbook presents a comprehensive and cohesive overview of the most important aspects of the Republic of China on Taiwan, which readers around the world will certainly find useful and informative.

Throughout the text, an exchange rate of NT\$31.23 to US\$1 has been used to give meaning to financial statistics for non-Taiwan readers.

We invite readers to visit the GIO website at [www.gio.gov.tw](http://www.gio.gov.tw) for the most recent information on the ROC.

**What's New**

1. Typhoons in 2000
2. Updated climatic statistics

Since the government's withdrawal to Taiwan in 1949, the term Republic of China has been taken to apply to the territory under the government's effective control: the islands of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, Matsu, and a number of smaller islands. For the sake of simplicity, these are sometimes referred to collectively as "Taiwan."

**Taiwan**

Off the eastern coast of Asia lie the mountainous island arcs of the Western Pacific. The island chain closest to the continent marks the edge of the Asiatic Continental Shelf. Taiwan, one of the islands of this chain, is the largest body of land between Japan and the Philippines.

The island of Taiwan is 394 km long and 144 km at its widest point, shaped like a tobacco leaf. It is located between 21°53'50" and 25°18'20" N latitude and between 120°01'00" and 121°59'15" E longitude.

With a total area of nearly 36,000 sq. km, Taiwan is separated from the Chinese mainland by the Taiwan Strait, which is about 220 km at its widest point and 130 km at its narrowest. The island is almost equidistant from Shanghai and Hong Kong.

The surface geology of the island varies in age from very recent alluvial deposits to early sedimentary and crystalline rocks. The structure is formed by a tilted fault block running roughly northeast to southwest along the entire length. The steep slope of this tilted block faces east and the rock mass slopes more gently to the west. This block is composed primarily of old rocks, some of which have been subjected to heat and pressure. Only one-third of the land area is arable. The mountains are



*Eroded sandstone shaped like frozen yogurt is one of the many topographical rock formations typically found in the Northeast Coast National Scenic Area.*

(Photo by Liao Tai-chi)

mostly forested, with some minerals, chiefly coal, at the northern end.

On the east coast, the mountains rise steeply from the Pacific. To the west, the level sediments lie just below the surface of the sea. As a result, river deposits have filled the shallow waters and extended the land 15 to 30 km westward from the foothills, giving Taiwan a larger proportion of useful level land than either

### Position of Taiwan

Locality	Longitude		Latitude	
	Aspect	Apex	Aspect	Apex
Total Taiwan Area	Eastern Point	124°34'09"	Southern Point	21°45'18"
	Western Point	119°18'03"	Northern Point	25°56'21"
Taiwan Proper	Eastern Point	121°59'15"	Southern Point	21°53'50"
	Western Point	120°01'00"	Northern Point	25°18'20"
Penghu Islands	Eastern Point	119°42'54"	Southern Point	23°09'40"
	Western Point	119°18'03"	Northern Point	23°45'41"

Japan or the Philippines. Natural resources and agricultural potential make this coastal plain of great importance.

The shoreline of Taiwan is relatively smooth and unbroken with a total length of 1,566 km (including the Penghu Islands). Off the southern end of the island lie small area of coral reefs, which have built up along the island's shores.

The most important feature of Taiwan's topography is the central range of high mountains running from the northeast corner to the southern tip of the island. Steep mountains over 1,000 meters high constitute about 31 percent of the island's land area; hills and terraces between 100 and 1,000 meters above sea level make up 38 percent; and alluvial plains below 100 meters in elevation, where most communities, farming activities, and industries are concentrated, account for the remaining 31 percent. Based on differences in elevation, relative relief character of rock formations, and structural patterns, the island can be divided physiographically into five major divisions: the mountain ranges, volcanic mountains, foothills, tablelands, and coastal plains and basins.

### Mountain Ranges

Taiwan's five longitudinal mountain ranges occupy almost half of the island. As a group, they extend 330 km from north to south and average about 80 km from east to west. They include more than two hundred peaks with elevations of over 3,000 meters.

### Central Range

The Central Range 中央山脈 extends from Suao 蘇澳 in the north to Oluanpi 鵝鑾鼻 in the south, forming a ridge of high mountains and serving as the island's major watershed for rivers and streams. The range is predominantly composed of hard rock formations resistant to weathering and erosion, although heavy rainfall has deeply scarred the sides with gorges and sharp valleys. The relative relief of the terrain is usually extensive, and the forest-clad mountains with their extreme ruggedness are almost impenetrable. The east side of the Central Range is the steepest mountain slope in Taiwan, with fault scarps ranging in height from 120 to 1,200 meters.

### Mount Snow Range

The Mount Snow Range 雪山山脈 lies northwest of the Central Range, beginning at Santiao Chiao 三貂角 in the northeast and gaining elevation as it extends toward the southwest. Mount Snow 雪山, the main peak, is 3,884 meters high.

### Mount Jade Range

The Mount Jade Range 玉山山脈 runs along the southwestern flank of the Central Range. It includes the island's tallest peak, the 3,952-meter Mount Jade 玉山.

### Mount Ali Range

The Mount Ali Range 阿里山山脈 lies west of the Mount Jade Range, with major elevations between 1,000 and 2,000 meters. The main peak, Mount Ta 塔山, towers 2,484 meters.