

Summarized Results of the Public Opinion Survey
(Dec 15 to 17, 2006)
“The Public’s View on Current Cross-Strait Relations”

With regard to the government's initial plan to allow a daily quota of 1,000 Chinese tourists to visit Taiwan, 43.5 percent of the public believe the this quota is the right size, 23.2 percent of the public believe it is too small, and 17.5 percent of the public believe it is too large.

The public believe that the opening up of tourism in Taiwan for Chinese tourists can promote the economy, increase tourism revenue, allow Chinese people to experience Taiwan’s democracy and freedom, and enhance understanding between the people across the Strait.

75.6 percent of the public agree that after the smooth implementation of charter flights, the government should promote direct cross-strait transportation links in a sequential and orderly manner based on the experience of operating these flights.

On the issue of direct cross-strait transportation links, 70.3 percent of the public believe the government should “conditionally” open such links, while only 16.4 percent believe such links should be opened “unconditionally.”

On the issue of further easing of restrictions on China-bound investments by Taiwanese businesspeople, 56.7 percent of the public believe that, under the current lack of consensus in society, restrictions should not be immediately eased.

The vast majority of the public (85.5 percent) still advocate maintaining the status quo defined in a broader sense (including “maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later,” “maintaining the status quo and unification later,” “maintaining the status quo and independence later,” and

“maintaining the status quo indefinitely”). Only a very small minority of people (2.2 percent) support unification as soon as possible. Similarly, the proportion of people advocating for declaration of independence as soon as possible only accounts for 6.1 percent. The results are consistent with the trends shown in previous surveys.

I. Survey Background and Methods

In order to gain understanding of the public’s views on related issues concerning cross-strait relations, the MAC commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of Taiwanese adults aged 20 and over in the Taiwan Area between December 15 to December 17, 2006. A total of 1,073 effective samples were obtained, with a sampling error of about 3% based on a 95% confidence level.

II. Major Findings

(1) Views on opening up tourism in Taiwan for Chinese tourists

With regard to the government's initial plan to allow a daily quota of 1,000 Chinese tourists to visit Taiwan, 43.5 percent of the public believe the quota is the right size, 23.2 percent of the public believe it is too small, and 17.5 percent of the public believe it is too large. Furthermore, regarding the positive significance of this policy, the public believe it can promote the economy, increase tourism revenue, allow Chinese people to experience Taiwan’s democracy and freedom, and enhance understanding between the people across the Strait .

(2) Views on direct cross-strait transportation links

On the issue of direct cross-strait transportation links, 70.3 percent of the public believe such links should be “opened conditionally,” while 16.4 percent believe they should be “opened unconditionally.”

75.6 percent of the public agree that after the smooth implementation of the Lunar New Year, Mid-Autumn Festival, and other cross-strait charter flights,

the government should promote direct cross-strait transportation links in a sequential and orderly manner based on the experience of operating these flights. 12 percent of the public disagree.

(3) Views on China-bound investments by Taiwanese businesspeople

Regarding restrictions imposed by the government on China-bound investments by Taiwanese businesspeople, 49.7 percent of the public believe such limits should be “slightly tightened,” while 35.1 percent believe they should be “slightly eased.”

With regard to whether restrictions on China-bound investments by Taiwanese businesspeople should be further eased, 56.7 percent of the public believe that, under the current lack of consensus in society, restrictions should not be immediately eased while 28.4 percent support immediate easing.

(4) Public perception of China’s hostility toward Taiwan

59.5 percent of the public believe that the Chinese authorities are unfriendly to the Taiwanese government (including 23.8 percent responding “extremely unfriendly” and 35.7 percent responding “unfriendly”). Moreover, 41.7 percent of the public believe the Chinese authorities are unfriendly to the Taiwanese people (including 12.7 percent responding “extremely unfriendly” and 29 percent responding “unfriendly”). The results are similar to those of recent MAC surveys.

(5) Views on prioritization of diplomatic and cross-strait relations

On the issue of prioritization of developing diplomatic and cross-strait relations, 41.7 percent believe that it is “more important to develop relations between Taiwan and China,” while 32.2 percent believe it is “more important to develop relations with other countries.” The proportion of people believing the two are of “equal importance” is 14.7 percent. Furthermore, when asked if the development of diplomatic relations will cause tensions in cross-strait relations, 68 percent of those interviewed agree that the

government should continue to develop diplomatic relations with other countries, while 19.7 percent of the public disagree. The findings are consistent with the trends shown in previous surveys.

(6) Views on cross-strait exchanges

Regarding the pace of the government's opening up of cross-strait civilian exchanges, 35.6 percent of the public believe the pace is "just right," 29.6 percent believe it is "too slow," and 19 percent believe it is "too fast."

(7) Views on unification vs. independence

The vast majority of the public (85.5 percent) still advocate maintaining the status quo defined in a broader sense (including "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later," "maintaining the status quo and unification later," "maintaining the status quo and independence later," and "maintaining the status quo indefinitely"). The results are consistent with the trends shown in previous surveys.

Of the six possible positions on this issue, the largest number (38.6 percent) support "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later," while 16.9 percent support "maintaining the status quo indefinitely." The results are largely similar to those in previous surveys. Furthermore, the proportion of people leaning towards independence (23.6 percent, including 6.1 percent for "independence as soon as possible" and 17.5 percent for "maintaining the status quo and independence later") is greater than the proportion leaning towards unification (14.7 percent, including 2.2 percent for "unification as soon as possible" and 12.5 percent for "maintaining the status quo and unification later").

(8) Views on China's "one country, two systems" formula

Regarding China's stance on developing cross-strait relations under the "one country, two systems" formula, 73 percent of the public disapprove, while only 14.6 percent of the public agree. The results are consistent with those of previous public opinion surveys.