

Summarized Results of the Public Opinion Survey on the "Public's View on Current Cross-Strait Relations"

(October 27 to 31, 2017)

- The majority of the people agree that mainland China should pragmatically face up to the fact that the Republic of China (ROC) is a sovereign state (73.9%). The majority also support the government's determination to safeguard national sovereignty and the well-being of the people, as well as its commitment to maintaining peaceful and stable development across the Taiwan Strait (81.8%).
- More than 70% of the people agree that the two sides should cherish the accumulated achievements and goodwill from the past 30 years of exchanges and seek breakthroughs on the existing basis (78.2%). They also agree with the statement: "The two sides should pragmatically handle cross-Strait affairs through dialogue and communication without preconditions." (76.2%)
- More than 80% of the public support the position that Taiwan's future and the development of cross-Strait relations must be decided by the 23 million people of Taiwan (84.9%), as well as approve the statement: "Facing the changing situation, the leaders of the two sides should work together to find a new model for benign cross-Strait interaction and lay a foundation for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait." (88.6%).
- People in favor of "maintaining the status quo defined in a broad sense" still account for the great majority of the public (85.2%), maintaining a stable long-term trend. As for views on the current pace of cross-Strait exchanges, 36.3% of the public believe it to be "just right," followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow," at 8.5% and 40.8% respectively.

I. Survey Background and Methods

To understand the views of the Taiwanese people on issues related to cross-Strait relations, the Mainland Affairs Council commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in Taiwan from October 27 to 31, 2017. A total of 1,077 effective samples were collected, with a sampling error of 2.99% at a 95% confidence level.

II. Major Findings

(1) Views on the government's cross-Strait policy and related issues

Over 70% of the public approve the position that mainland China should pragmatically face up to the fact that the ROC is a sovereign state (73.9%). More than 80% of the public support the government's position of firmly defending national sovereignty and dignity and the well-being of the people, as well as its commitment to maintaining peaceful and stable development across the Taiwan Strait (81.8%). Over 70% of the public support President Tsai Ing-wen's principle in handling cross-Strait relations, namely that the government's goodwill and commitments will not change, nor will the government revert to the old path of confrontation or bow to pressure (70.3%). A similar percentage also approve the position that the two sides should cherish the accumulated achievements and goodwill from the past 30 years of exchanges and seek breakthroughs on the existing basis (78.2%).

(2) Views on mainland China's Taiwan policy and cross-Strait interaction and exchanges

More than 60% of the public do not agree with mainland China's insistence that the political positions it holds serve as the basis for developing cross-Strait relations (66%). Over 70% of the public agree that, "The two sides should resolve differences and pragmatically handle cross-Strait affairs through dialogue and communication without preconditions" (76.2%). Additionally, more than 60% of the people approve the statement that, "Mainland China should stop unilaterally tightening cross-Strait exchanges and intimidating Taiwan with military exercises and training. Only this would be conducive to the benign development of cross-Strait relations." (64.2%) Furthermore, over 80% of the public agree with the statement that "Taiwan's external development and international participation should not be subject to political interference and pressure. This is Taiwan's due right." (86.9%)

(3) Views on the future development of cross-Strait relations

More than 80% of the public support the government's emphasis that Taiwan's future and the development of cross-Strait relations must be decided by the 23 million people of Taiwan (84.9%). Moreover, nearly 90% of the public approve the statement that, "Facing the changing situation, the leaders of the two sides should work together to find a new model for benign cross-Strait interaction and lay a foundation for peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait." (88.6%)

(4) Views on unification or independence

An overwhelming majority of the public (85.2%) still support "maintaining the status quo defined in the 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"). Of the six possible views, "maintaining the status quo and deciding on independence or unification later" enjoys the highest level of support (32.6%), followed by "maintaining the status quo indefinitely" (25.0%).

(5) Views on the pace of cross-Strait exchanges

Regarding the current pace of cross-Strait exchanges, 36.3% of the public believe the pace to be "just right", while 8.5% and 40.8% believe it is "too fast" and "too slow" respectively.

(6) Public perception on the attitude of the Mainland government toward Taiwan

The percentage of the public believing that the mainland Chinese government's attitude toward the ROC government is "unfriendly" (60.1%) is higher than the percentage believing it is "friendly" (25.2%). Regarding the mainland Chinese government's attitude toward the people of Taiwan, 44.8% of the public believe it is unfriendly, slightly higher than the 41.0% believing it is friendly.