

MAC: Public Affirm the Benefits of the Trade in Services Agreement in Developing the Mainland Market and Signing Economic Cooperation Pacts with Other Countries: The Government will Continue Broad-based Communication to Facilitate Implementation of Agreement

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) announced today (December 27, 2013) the results of its latest routine public opinion survey. On the long observed cross-strait issue, the survey indicated that the great majority of the public (84.6%) still advocates "maintaining the status quo defined in the broad sense." Moreover, nearly 70% (68.7%) of the public support the continued handling of cross-strait exchange issues through institutionalized negotiations. As for the current pace of opening up cross-strait exchanges, 37.1% of the public believe it to be "just right," followed by the percentages believing the pace to be "too fast" and "too slow" at 36.3% and 15.8%, respectively.

The survey results also showed that nearly 60% (58.2%) of the public affirm the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement beneficial to expansion of Taiwanese market share in the Mainland, while 46.5% of the public think the opening of Taiwan's service industry to Mainland investment will boost Taiwan's economic development. Furthermore, more than half of the public (51.6%) believe the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement to be beneficial to the signing of economic cooperation agreements between Taiwan and other countries. Overall, 45.7% of the public support the signing of the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement, representing an increase of 5.6% over the figure in

the MAC polls conducted this September, whereas the percentage of people not supporting the agreement decreased by 5.3% since September, accounting for 40.4% of the total surveyed public.

The MAC stated that the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement is a benchmark of further trade liberalization in Taiwan and very important to Taiwan's participation in regional economic integration. With respect to the potential challenges and impact due to the opening of the Cross-Strait Trade in Services Agreement, the government has planned comprehensive supporting measures, established rigorous review and management mechanisms. The agreement will definitely not open up the Taiwanese labor market to Mainland laborers, and concerned scenarios of market monopolization by Mainland enterprises or its low-priced goods will not be allowed in Taiwan. Regarding the different views and concerns of certain parties, related government agencies have continuously held seminars to communicate with and explain to the public. In conjunction with public hearings held by the Legislative Yuan, the government has also strengthened communication with industrial unions and various domestic sectors to promote the public's accurate understanding of the trade in services agreement. Any communication channel or method beneficial to increasing understanding will continue to be adapted so as to facilitate the smooth implementation of the agreement.

The MAC commissioned the Election Study Center of National Chengchi University to conduct a telephone survey of adults aged 20 and over in the Taiwan Area from December 5 to 9, 2013. A total of 1,073 valid samples were collected, with a sampling error of plus or minus 2.99% at a 95% level of confidence.