

## TAIPEI REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE IN THE UK

駐英國台北代表處



President Tsai issues remarks on government measures to combat COVID-19.

### IN THE NEWSLETTER

Key events featured in this issue include President Tsai's remarks on the government response to COVID-19, Vice President Chen highlighting how Taiwan can help combat coronavirus in an interview with *Sankei News*, Taiwan's CECC stepping up measures to address the coronavirus outbreak, Taiwan thanking UK parliamentarians for their support on the WHO issue, the UK media drawing attention to the WHO's mistreatment and exclusion of Taiwan as well as praising the country's handling of the coronavirus in three articles by *The Telegraph* and *Guardian*.

## **President Tsai emphasises Taiwan's strength and resilience in speech on COVID-19**

On 19 March, President Tsai Ing-wen, accompanied by Vice President Chen Chien-jen, delivered remarks regarding the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The president pointed out that today marks two months since the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was announced in Taiwan, and highlighted international praise for Taiwan's success in warding off the first wave of imported infections from abroad. She lauded the ability and commitment of the Taiwanese people to come together to fight COVID-19 as "crucial to our success in the first stage of preventing an outbreak." The president warned that despite Taiwan's proactive efforts, the second wave of imported infections has quickly come upon the country. Thus, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) has implemented drastic measures in response to a second wave of imported infections, including comprehensively tightened border controls and greatly enhanced testing and containment measures. "The next fourteen days will be crucial to the second stage of containing the virus."

The president urged Taiwanese people to fully follow the CECC's regulations, refrain from hostility and mutual blame as well as avoid causing panic and help to spread accurate information. "At this time, taking care of your own health and the health of your family is the best way to protect our country," she said. President Tsai expressed gratitude to the national team working to manufacture goods to prevent the spread of the virus. The president offered reassurance that the government has ample supplies of all medical materials prepared. Commenting on the economy, President Tsai stressed that despite the virus's economic impact, Taiwan's overall economic performance is still relatively stable compared to other countries. She highlighted the government's proactive measures in response, including an NT\$60 billion disease prevention special budget to accelerate the implementation of industry relief measures as well as NT\$40 billion in existing budgets and funds that can be shifted to contingency measures. "These two funding sources amount to a combined total of approximately NT\$100 billion that can be directed towards our relief and economic stimulus programme," the president stated.

The president stressed Taiwan's cooperation with other countries to combat the virus, citing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and American Institute in Taiwan issuing a Taiwan-US Joint Statement on a Partnership against Coronavirus, strengthening cooperation with the US in joint R&D for rapid tests, vaccines and medicines as well as Academia Sinica and the EU's in-depth discussions over collaboration to develop preventative and quarantine technology as well as vaccines. "Full international cooperation is the only way to ensure that the international community can win this battle," the president stressed. The president pointed out the World Health Organization (WHO)'s inability to fully play its role and lead global prevention efforts has led to the global spread of the pandemic. The president called on countries around the world to accelerate cooperation: "Taiwan is willing to contribute our epidemic response capabilities so that together, we can care for the health of humankind. We are putting the goal of 'Taiwan can help' into practice." The president stressed that despite the difficulties, Taiwan will become stronger by overcoming this challenge. "We will do everything we can to control the COVID-19 outbreak and protect our citizens," she concluded.

## Vice President Chen highlights how Taiwan can help combat coronavirus in *Sankei News* interview



(Original source: *Office of the President*)

On 28 February, Taiwan Vice President Chen Chien-jen sat down for an interview with Japanese –language media outlet *Sankei News* to highlight Taiwan’s experience in dealing with COVID-19. Vice President Chen, an epidemiologist by training who previously served as Taiwan’s Minister of Health during the SARS epidemic in 2003, stressed that Taiwan has done a good job of containing the virus. The VP pointed out Taiwan has not developed cluster infections, such as in South Korea or Singapore, and attributed the country’s low number of coronavirus cases to experience from the SARS epidemic. “The Centers for Disease Control and the Central Epidemic Command Center have an experienced chain of command providing a swift response, as Taiwan will always be faced with the challenge of diseases coming from other nations,” he stated. Vice President Chen pointed out that due to the many Taiwanese working in China and the large number of Chinese tourists, the government was prepared to see a high number of COVID-19 patients enter Taiwan, like the SARS epidemic. “If travellers coming to Taiwan are healthy and remain healthy, it will be a win-win situation for everyone,” the vice president said.

Commenting on China locking down cities to contain the outbreak of coronavirus, Vice President Chen said the decision carries significant economic and security costs, adding that it would be better to implement disease prevention measures when there is an infection cluster. In response to questions about Taiwan and the World Health Organization (WHO), the VP stressed that while Taiwan is not a member of the WHO, it works harder than many of its members in advancing health care. He pointed out that Taiwan could have offered constructive advice early last month about the situation in Wuhan, China, if it was allowed to join the WHO.

## Taiwan's CECC unveils further measures to address COVID-19 outbreak



In March, Minister of Health and Welfare and head of Taiwan's Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) Dr Shih-Chung Chen unveiled further measures to address the COVID-19 outbreak in Taiwan. The number of confirmed cases of coronavirus in Taiwan remains relatively low, and the new measures cover border control, home quarantine and isolation, monitoring of home quarantine and isolation, group quarantine, care and support systems, nosocomial infection management, as well as the country's capacity for medical response actions-testing and triage, risk assessment of large-scale public gatherings and face mask production.

The CECC also highlighted capacity of Taiwan's healthcare system to handle the impact of the coronavirus, citing the preparation of 134 healthcare facilities for response and isolation of mild cases, 167 facilities for testing, 50 regional medical centres for severe cases and 13 facilities for group quarantine that can accommodate up to 1500 people. Prior to these measures, the government also successfully completed a project to establish 60 face mask production lines in 25 days. The project involves a total of 15 manufacturers which are set to produce 10 million face masks on a daily basis to meet increasing demand.

Considering its proximity to and close interactions with China (600 weekly flights and over 9.3 million trips in 2019), Taiwan's achievements in terms of the death rate, incidence and speed of transmission of coronavirus are outstanding, with 235 confirmed cases and 2 deaths as of 25 March. Taiwan has thus effectively controlled the epidemic in the face of extremely frequent interactions with China and the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, and can serve as a model to help the world.



# Taiwan thanks UK parliamentarians for support on WHO issue

## British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group

The Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland  
London SW1A 0AA, United Kingdom

28 February 2020

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus  
Director-General  
World Health Organization  
Avenue Appia 20  
1211 Geneva  
Switzerland

Dear Director-General,

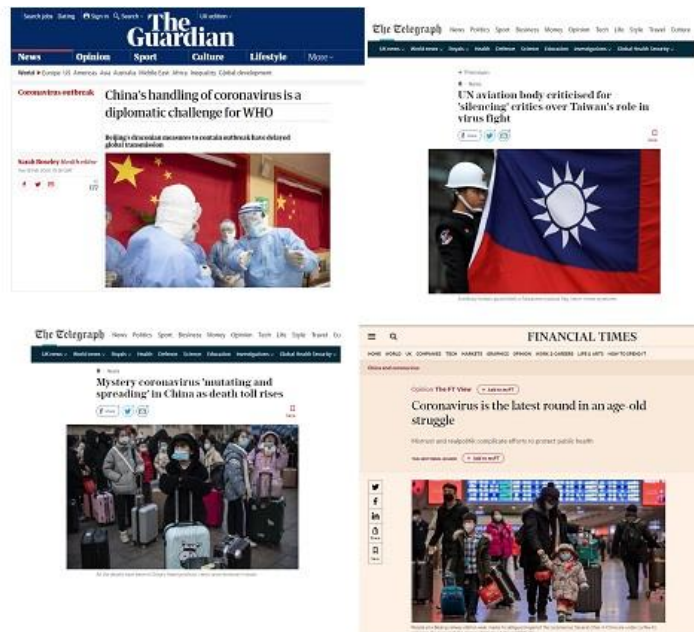
As members of the British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group joined by other colleagues of both Houses of the British Parliament we wish to express our serious concern over the WHO's wrongful treatment of Taiwan as part of China, including erroneously listing Taiwan under China in its situation reports on the 2019 novel coronavirus.

Taiwan is not under China's jurisdiction, and we are certain you are well aware that Taiwan's and China's health care systems are managed by completely separate and independent health authorities. Listing Taiwan under China in the WHO reports not only incorrectly suggests that Taiwan, like China, possesses "very high risk" of the 2019 novel coronavirus and leads to inappropriate policy decisions, but also seriously impedes the timely exchange of information between proper authorities. This in turn dangerously undermines the international effort to tackle this serious global health epidemic.

On 4 March, Taiwan's MOFA expressed gratitude to 55 UK parliamentarians who co-signed a letter to WHO Director-General Ghebreyesus expressing their grave concern over the global body's unfair treatment of Taiwan. The letter, signed by British-Taiwanese All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) Co-Chairs Lord Rogan and Martin Vickers and 53 other lawmakers from both houses of parliament, urged WHO Director-General Ghebreyesus to correct the global body's wrongful classification of Taiwan under China's jurisdiction, including erroneously listing Taiwan under China in its situation reports on the 2019 novel coronavirus. The UK parliamentarians stressed that Taiwan is not under China's jurisdiction, adding that Taiwan's and China's health care systems are managed by completely separate and independent health authorities. They also pointed out that the WHO's decision to list Taiwan as part of China in its reports not only incorrectly suggests that Taiwan possesses "very high risk" of the 2019 novel coronavirus, but also leads to inappropriate policy decisions, but also seriously impedes the timely exchange of information between proper health authorities.

The parliamentarians pointed out that the WHO's treatment of Taiwan as part of China and exclusion of Taiwan greatly hinders the shared goal of building a seamless global health security network. The UK lawmakers stressed that globalisation dramatically increases the transmission of infectious diseases, and that blocking Taiwan from the global health network thus seriously impairs international preparedness and response to public health emergencies like the 2019 novel coronavirus, putting everyone at risk. The parliamentarians pointed out that despite close economic ties and geographical proximity to China, Taiwan's number of confirmed cases is limited, adding "this is testament to the Taiwan health authority's effective management and control over the situation." The parliamentarians stressed that Taiwan's experience and expertise in dealing with health emergencies should therefore be highly valued and widely shared within the international community. The letter concluded by calling on the WHO to immediately correct its wrongful treatment of Taiwan as part of China and urged for Taiwan's prompt inclusion in all WHO technical meetings and activities, including the World Health Assembly.

## UK media draws attention to WHO's mistreatment and exclusion of Taiwan



Throughout February and January, UK major media outlets drew attention to Taiwan's exclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the global body's wrongful treatment of Taiwan as part of China amid the coronavirus outbreak. On 18 February, *The Guardian* pointed out in an article titled "China's handling of coronavirus is a diplomatic challenge for WHO" that despite the fact that the number of reported cases in Taiwan at that time was only 22 while China's was more than 72,400, Taiwan received the same "very high" risk rating for coronavirus as China, causing other countries to impose travel bans. The article also cited MOFA Spokesperson Joanne Ou, who stated "We urge the WHO to be professional and neutral: break away from China's unreasonable claim. Don't be kidnapped by China."

On 22 January, *The Telegraph* also pointed out the WHO's incorrect designation and exclusion of Taiwan in an article titled "Mystery coronavirus 'mutating and spreading' in China as death toll rises", citing Taipei's concerns that exclusion from global health security networks creates a loophole that could leave the region and its 23 million people more vulnerable to pandemics. The article quoted President Tsai's statement that transparency would also be beneficial for Chinese people: "We believe that political considerations should not come before safeguarding people." On 28 January, the paper published another article titled "UN aviation body criticised for 'silencing' critics over Taiwan's role in virus fight" drawing attention to Taiwan's exclusion from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and how the UN body's decision to ban Taiwan creates a potentially dangerous loophole for international passengers, particularly during global pandemics when speedy information is key to lowering risks to public health. The piece pointed out that Taiwan's Taoyuan airport is the 11th busiest in the world in terms of passenger numbers. Regarding ICAO's blocking of Twitter accounts expressing support for Taiwan's participation, the article cited a statement from Taiwan's MOFA calling on all members of the international community to abandon their political bias and personal interest and cooperate.

On 24 January, *The Financial Times* published an editorial titled “Coronavirus is the latest round in an age-old struggle” citing Taiwan’s exclusion from the WHO as an example of how mistrust and realpolitik are complicating efforts to protect public health. The FT points out that despite its messages of worldwide “solidarity and cooperation,” the WHO continues to exclude Taiwan from key meetings and information sharing, under Chinese pressure: “That risks creating a loophole for the coronavirus and future diseases. Pandemics and politics do not mix well.”

## Taiwan’s response to coronavirus lauded as ‘gold standard’ by *The Telegraph*

**The Telegraph** Coronavirus News Politics Sport Business Money Opinion Tech Life Style Travel Culture

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### Taiwan sets gold standard on epidemic response to keep infection rates low

Early intervention, a clear command structure and transparent communication with the public have helped control the spread of the virus

By Nicola Smith, ASIA CORRESPONDENT  
6 March 2020 - 9:36am

Related Topics  
Taiwan Asia Coronavirus



A chemical unit of the Taiwanese army disinfects a quarantine compound | CREDIT: GMA

On 6 March, Taiwan’s measures to combat COVID-19 were praised by *The Telegraph* in an article titled “Taiwan sets gold standard on epidemic response to keep infection rates low”. The paper lauded the Taiwan government’s early intervention, clear command structure and transparent communication with the public for helping control the spread of the virus, adding that other countries like the UK could learn from such measures. *The Telegraph* pointed out that before the new respiratory disease was on the world’s radar, Taiwanese officials began boarding flights to check the health of passengers from the Chinese city. The Taiwanese government then blocked flights from China, quarantined travellers from infected areas before other Asian countries as well as issued daily updates and warnings about locations visited by infected COVID-19 patients prior to their diagnosis.

Further measures included public buildings requiring people to disinfect their hands upon entrance as well as rationing an official stockpile of 44 million masks to ensure a steady flow to the public. The article also mentioned Taiwan Digital Minister Audrey Tang’s creation of an online tracing system that enables people to search for pharmacies that have face masks in stock. In addition, Taiwan integrated national health and immigration information to track individuals at high risk based on their recent travel to affected areas and monitor home quarantine, as well as established a hotline in every major city for people to report suspicious symptoms. *The Telegraph* also drew attention to Taiwan’s

wrongful exclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international organisations due to China's pressure.

## Taiwan's preparedness to combat COVID-19 praised by *The Guardian*



On 7 March, Taiwan's preparation to prevent the spread of coronavirus was praised in an article by *The Guardian* titled "Taipei seems to have the virus in hand. Now I worry about returning to the UK". The piece drew attention to Taiwan's precautionary measures, including taking travellers' temperatures at the airport, frequent use of hand sanitiser and wearing face masks. The article points out the Taiwanese government, based on its past experience of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), "acted swiftly and did not wait for the WHO to make an official announcement to take action." The piece cites Taiwanese authorities' stopping flights from China and other virus-affected areas, making news and information about the outbreak freely available and the Taiwan Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung taking a hands-on approach by holding press conferences almost every day.

The article notes that President Tsai Ing-wen's handling of the crisis has been applauded. The parliament has approved a £1.5 billion stimulus package for companies hit by the outbreak, and the local television network, TVBS, gave her government an 82% approval rating. The piece highlights Taiwan's low number of confirmed cases compared to other affected countries. The author concluded by expressing concern over what awaited them after leaving Taiwan.



## ***The Guardian* spotlights Taiwan's disease prevention efforts despite diplomatic isolation by China**



On 13 March, Taiwan's methods for combating COVID-19 were spotlighted in an article titled "How Taiwan is containing coronavirus—despite diplomatic isolation by China" by *The Guardian*. The piece stressed how the 'harsh lessons' Taiwan learned from the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) has helped keep the country's infections under 50, despite its exclusion from the World Health Organization (WHO) due to China's pressure. The article points out that as the UK, US, Italy and other countries outside China struggle to cope with rising cases of the virus within their borders, many are taking note of Taiwan's successes: "Experts and officials say effective controls in Taiwan can be attributed to the use of technology, a central command centre, its single-payer healthcare system and swift decision making." Taiwan's quick implementation of border controls and ban on surgical mask exports were raised as examples of effective measures in combating the spread of the disease. The article notes that despite the sense of calm, Taiwanese officials are still on high alert, citing Taiwan Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung's statement last week that community transmission was unavoidable in the long run and Taiwan needed to be prepared.

The piece also drew attention to Taiwan's exclusion from the WHO and other international organisations due to China's objections, "even though Taiwan functions as a sovereign country with an independent, democratically-elected government." The article noted that Taiwan has been barred from attending the annual World Health Assembly (WHA) since 2017 due to China's lobbying, adding that in the current outbreak, Taiwan has been excluded from WHO emergency meetings on the coronavirus with the exception of Taiwanese experts participating online in a WHO forum about COVID-19 on 12 February. The piece also highlighted the international support for Taiwan's participation in the WHO, including from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The article follows similar praise for Taiwan's response to coronavirus from many international media outlets around the world, including Canada, the US, St Lucia, Chile, Spain, France, Italy, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and other nations.

# TAIWAN HEALTH PROFILE

## Basic Statistics (2019)

Total population (1,000 persons)	23,603
Population density (persons/km <sup>2</sup> )	652
Population aged under 15 (%)	12.8
Population aged over 64 (%)	15.3
Crude birth rate (‰)	7.5
Crude death rate (‰)	7.5
Total fertility rate <sup>a</sup> (per woman)	1.1

a: Total fertility rate in 2018

## International Comparisons

Country	Life expectancy at birth	Healthy life expectancy at birth	Neonatal mortality rate	Maternal mortality ratio	Current health expenditure	
	(years)	(years)	(per 1,000 live births)	(per 100,000 live births)	As a share of GDP	Per capita
	2017	2016	2017	2015	(%)	(US\$ PPP) 2017
Taiwan	80.4	71.2	2.5	12	6.1	3,047
Australia	82.6	73.0	2.4	6	9.1	4,543
Canada	82.0	73.2	3.5	7	10.4	4,826
France	82.6	73.4	2.8	8	11.5	4,902
Germany	81.1	71.6	2.3	6	11.3	5,728
Japan	84.2	74.8	0.9	5	10.7	4,717
UK	81.3	71.9	2.8	9	9.6	4,246
US	78.6	68.5	3.9	14	17.2	10,209

## Universal Health Coverage

Taiwan's UHC remains one of the best in the world, ranked 14th in Global Access to Healthcare Index by the Economist in 2017 and 9th in Health Care Efficiency Index by the Bloomberg Finance in 2018.

<b>Universal</b>	99.9% coverage rate
<b>Comprehensive</b>	NHI covers all medically necessary services, the provision of over 16,000 prescription drugs, and home and rehabilitative care.
<b>Accessible</b>	Per 10,000 persons (2018): Density of health workforce: 132.6 persons Beds available at health facilities: 71.0
<b>Affordable</b>	Total health expenditure (2018): As a share of GDP: 6.58% Per capita: US\$1,697

## MediCloud


Long known as a high-tech powerhouse, Taiwan combines its strength in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and **medicine** to further improve efficiency and quality of healthcare services. **MediCloud** is a state of the art cloud-based medical record platform of the National Health Insurance System. It enables quality and precise personalized care while reaching cost saving goals.




• Four cancer screenings recommended by WHO are included in the National Cancer Screening Program.




• Breast Cancer  
F, 45-69 y,  
2-yrly mammogram



• Colorectal Cancer  
50-74 y,  
2-yrly iFOBT



• Oral Cancer  
Smokers/  
betel-quid chewers, ≥30 y,  
2-yrly oral mucosal exam



• Cervical Cancer  
F, >30y,  
3-yrly pap test

## Cancer Screening and Elimination of Cervical Cancer

Taiwan has offered fully subsidized screening for breast, cervical, colorectal, and oral cavity cancers since 2010. The colorectal cancer and breast cancer screening rates have risen four times from 2009 until now. The death of cervical cancer has dropped about 70% from 1996 to 2016.

Since December 2018, to eliminate cervical cancer, **HPV vaccines** have been freely offered to all Taiwanese girls aged 12-13. This national HPV program is an extension of regional programs in Taiwan which were launched in 2010.

## Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

Taiwan was among the first eight countries to employ the WHO's IHR 2005: Joint External Evaluation (JEE) tool, demonstrating our public health capacity and setting an example for the Asia-Pacific region.

To strengthen the Asia-Pacific region's capacity to diagnose, prevent, and respond to Chikungunya, Dengue Fever, Ebola, Enterovirus, MERS, and Zika, Taiwan and the US jointly organized several training workshops for participants from across the region.

Taiwan has successfully eradicated several deadly diseases, including malaria (1965) and polio (2000). A national immunization program (NIP), begun in 1954, has also reduced the incidence of other communicable diseases.

UPDATE: 2020/03

# TAIWAN HEALTH PROFILE

## Taiwan the Best

- 1st in **Health Care Index** (93 countries): Numbeo in 2020
- 9th in **Health Care Efficiency Index** (of the 56 economies): Bloomberg Finance in 2018
- 6th (the best in Asia) in **Quality of Death Index** (of the 80 countries): Economist Intelligence Unit in 2015
- The Best **Health Care Systems** (of the 89 countries): CEOWORLD in 2019
- 14th in Global **Access to Healthcare Index** (of the 60 countries): Economist Intelligence Unit in 2017

## Why Choose Taiwan?

### High Quality and Advanced Technology

Taiwan is proud to have earned praise and recognition for its high-quality medical services and health insurance system. Taiwan's medical achievements have an outstanding international reputation and are competitive worldwide.

### Affordable Price

Taiwan boasts the most innovative medical technology, quality equipment, and well-trained professionals in order to offer medical services at a reasonable price.

### Comprehensive Services

Our patient-centered medical team will direct and assist the patient throughout his/her procedure. After the health exam is performed, the health care coordinator will provide the patient with a complete health management program and schedule follow-up appointments.

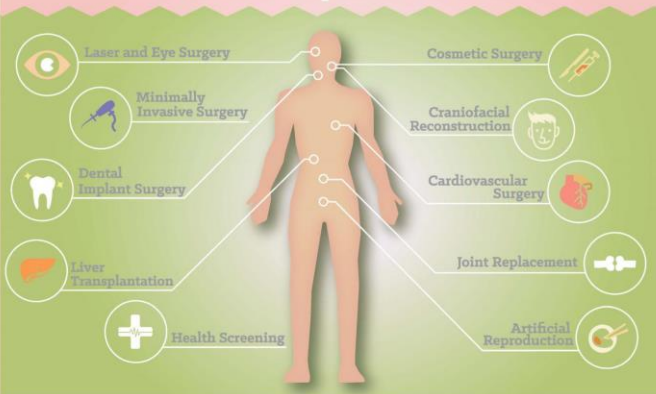
### Abundant natural resources

Taiwan's diverse natural landscapes and ecological resources, traditional folk customs, friendly people and customs, modern art, and profound food culture has made the country one of Asia's most popular tourist attractions.

Taiwan Task Force For Medical Travel  
www.medicaltravel.org.tw  
TEL : 886-2-2885-1528

AD by MOHW

## Medical Specialties



## International Cooperation

Taiwan has actively participated in international health cooperation and is committed to collaborating with other countries to overcome health challenges and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- **Medical Aid:** Taiwan International Health Action (TaiwanIHA)
- **Train The Trainer:** Taiwan International Healthcare Training Center (TIHTC); Healthcare Personnel Training Program
- **Equipment Donation:** Global Medical Instruments Support & Service Program (GMISS)
- **The New Southbound "One Country, One Center" Program**

A selection of ongoing cooperation projects are shown below.



Photo credit: TaiwanICDF

UPDATE: 2020/03



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