

# Taiwan

## *Ethnicity in Taiwan*

### *Group selection*

Politically relevant ethnic groups in Taiwan include the **Taiwanese** (84%), the **Mainland Chinese** (14%) and the **Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese** (2%).

The determination of ethnic groups in Taiwan is relational, political and fluid: Mainland Chinese and Taiwanese may be collectively grouped together as "Han". The nomenclature 'Taiwanese' is often used to refer to a composite of Hoklo and Hakka groups that were present in Taiwan prior to the influx of Mainland Chinese in 1949 at the end of the Chinese Civil War, but this term is also not stable and is used in a variety of ways, especially with respect to political currents and groupings. Additionally, Hakka are alternatively considered by some to be their own ethnic group. Many ethnic dynamics in Taiwan come down to a Taiwan-centric or China-centric focus rather than to a biological/heritage determination.

14 Austronesian people groups (referred to as aboriginal or indigenous) have official recognition. Nine groups were recognized by the KMT using inherited classifications from the Japanese, and five have attained recognition in the past 10 years (i.e. the Thao, 2001; Kavalan, 2002; Truku, 2004; Sakizaya, 2007; Seediq, 2008). These 14 groups are aggregated into one umbrella group, based on shared Austronesian heritage, shared national representation and political cooperation/unification (e.g. Council of Indigenous Peoples under the Executive Yuan from 1996). This umbrella grouping, indicating a common ethnic denominator and political cooperation, should not be confused with the classification used in the People's Republic of China, in which the groups from Taiwan are given a single ethnic classification, the Gaoshan.

*Power relations**1949-1986*

Taiwan was under martial law for 38 years under the Kuomintang (KMT). Following the establishment of the first opposition party (the Democratic Progressive Party) in 1986 and other democratic reforms, there has been increasing localization and multiculturalism at the political level.

*1987-1995*

The year 1987 indicates the lifting of martial law and the allowance of other political groups. Lee Tung-Hui, a Taiwanese, became president and Chairman of the KMT in 1988, and political power gradually shifted to being less China-centric.

*1996-1999*

Indigenous groups gained national-level representation in 1996, and increasing rights and powers following this time. The ascent of the DPP brought about further representation, recognition of autonomous and political rights, as well as an official change in name to 'indigenous' (previously resisted for its political and rights implications).

*2000-2008*

Taiwanese took a central position in the political arena from 2000, when the DPP came into power. There is, especially from 2000, increasing representation and influence of the Aboriginal/Indigenous groups in the government. However, in absolute terms, their influence is still less than that of Mainland Chinese, so the status designation remains "powerless."

*2009-2017*

Although the KMT was re-elected in 2008 and is currently in power, it can no longer be understood as being composed of and dominated by Mainland Chinese. However, President Ma Ying-jeou is regarded as being more China-centric.

Most levels of the political system have some sort of indigenous representation, and this is particularly the case for the legislative branch. Furthermore, amendments have been passed in the legislature that will allow the indigenous population to enjoy more local autonomy by electing their own district directors and chiefs, who have previously been appointed by mayors (<sup>4352</sup>). In 2015, critics complained that the government's efforts to preserve indigenous cultures was inadequate (<sup>4353</sup>). In 2016, certain groups continue to push for official recognition of some indigenous tribes. On August 1, the newly elected president issued the first formal apology to Taiwan's indigenous people for the injustices suffered throughout the

<sup>4352</sup> [US Department of State, 2014]

<sup>4353</sup> [US Department of State, 2015]

centuries (<sup>4354</sup>). It is important to note that due to the complicated relations between China and Taiwan, many countries do not recognize Taiwan's sovereignty, and thus only limited information is accessible with regards to the Indigenous Taiwanese peoples.

<sup>4354</sup> [US Department of State, 2016]

## *Bibliography*

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## *Political status of ethnic groups in Taiwan*

*From 1949 until 1986*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Taiwanese	0.84	POWERLESS
Mainland Chinese	0.14	DOMINANT
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	0.02	IRRELEVANT

*From 1987 until 1995*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Taiwanese	0.84	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mainland Chinese	0.14	SENIOR PARTNER
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	0.02	IRRELEVANT

*From 1996 until 1999*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Taiwanese	0.84	JUNIOR PARTNER
Mainland Chinese	0.14	SENIOR PARTNER
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	0.02	POWERLESS

*From 2000 until 2008*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Taiwanese	0.84	SENIOR PARTNER
Mainland Chinese	0.14	JUNIOR PARTNER
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	0.02	POWERLESS



Figure 884: Political status of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1949-1986.

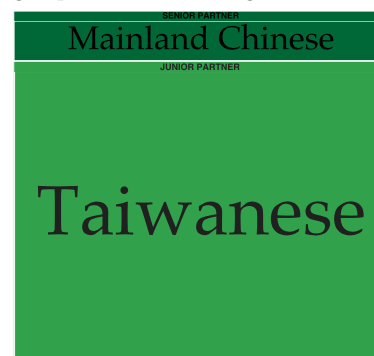


Figure 885: Political status of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1987-1995.

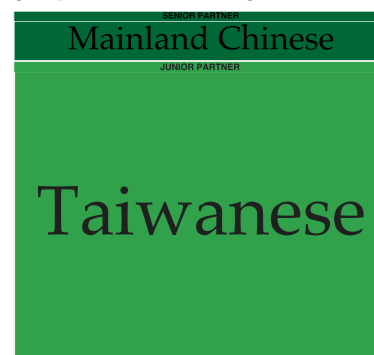
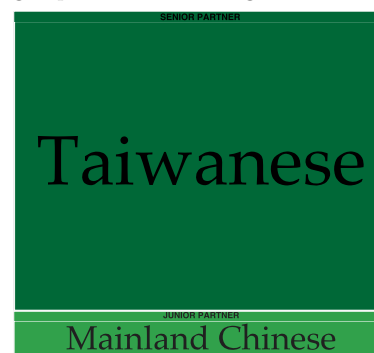


Figure 886: Political status of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1996-1999.



*From 2009 until 2017*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Taiwanese	0.84	SENIOR PARTNER
Mainland Chinese	0.14	SENIOR PARTNER
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	0.02	POWERLESS

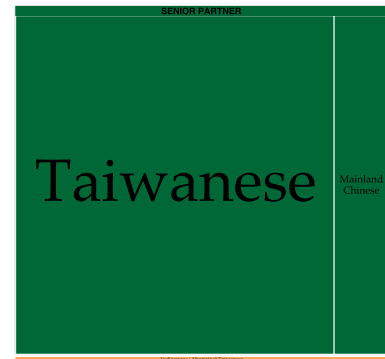


Figure 888: Political status of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 2009-2017.

## *Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Taiwan*

*From 1949 until 1995*

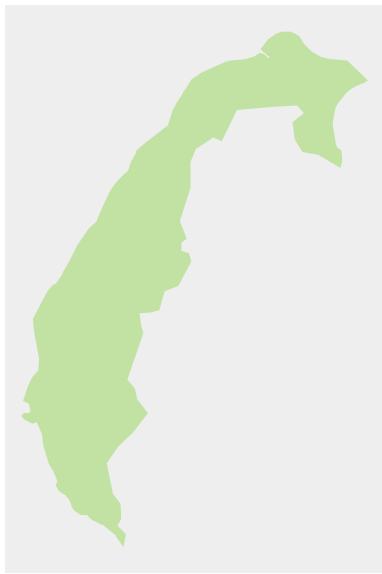


Figure 889: Map of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1949-1995.

Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
■ Taiwanese	17 248	Regional & urban
Mainland Chinese		Urban

Table 299: List of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1949-1995.

*From 1996 until 2017*



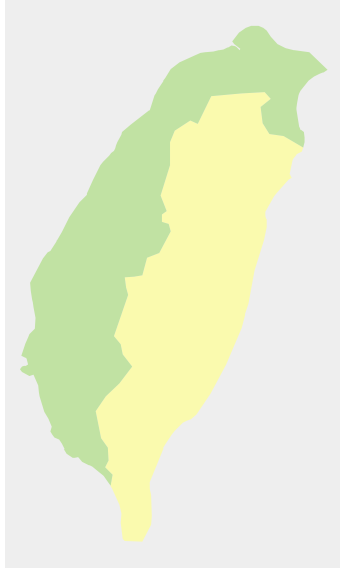


Figure 890: Map of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1996-2017.

Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
Indigenous/Aboriginal Taiwanese	18 741	Regionally based
Taiwanese Mainland Chinese	17 248	Regional & urban Urban

Table 300: List of ethnic groups in Taiwan during 1996-2017.

## *Conflicts in Taiwan*

*Starting on 1949-10-30*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of China	Government of Taiwan		1949-10-30			