



## Portrait of Canadians Abroad: Taiwan

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The Canadians Abroad Project consists of a policy research consortium initiated by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada with the support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Western Economic Diversification Canada, the Government of British Columbia and the Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation. This three year (2008-2010) joint research project analyzes the causes and consequences of the Canadian citizens by birth or naturalization living abroad.

# Portraits of Canadians Abroad: Taiwan<sup>1</sup>

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## **Executive Summary**

For many reasons, including data scarcity, estimates of the number of Canadians resident in Taiwan vary widely. However, it is believed that more than 20,000 Canadians have made Taiwan their home. According to official sources, in 2007, most Canadians employed in Taiwan were male and worked in the education sector. In addition, the majority of Canadians dwelled in Taipei City.

Noteworthy Canadians are involved in the media, commerce and entertainment sectors of the Taiwanese economy, or pursue educational, legal and humanitarian activities. Moreover, Canadian organizations operate in the business sector and social networking, including alumni associations.

While Canadians can spend up to 30 days in Taiwan without a visa, visitor, resident, diplomatic and courtesy visas are offered to

those who want to prolong their stay.

Taiwanese nationality status is a prerequisite to citizenship. In order to obtain Taiwanese nationality one must first renounce any other nationality or citizenship and, once nationality is granted, one can reapply for previous nationality or citizenship. Moreover, foreigners without ethnic ties to Taiwan can only become nationals through marriage to a Taiwanese. Taiwanese citizenship implies obligatory military service and voting rights.

## **A. Canadian Citizens Resident in Taiwan**

This profile presents two “best estimates” of the number of Canadians living in Taiwan provided by the Taiwanese census and the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei.

However, both data sets yield underestimates, primarily because they do not capture the number of Taiwanese-

born Canadians residing in Taiwan. The Taiwanese census does not record dual citizenship status. Therefore, many Taiwanese-born Canadians living in Taiwan will identify themselves as exclusively Taiwanese in order to receive all of the privileges and rights granted to Taiwanese citizens. Furthermore, Taiwanese-born Canadians may not register with the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, enter Taiwan with their Canadian passport, nor get a visa as it is not required for a Taiwanese citizen to enter Taiwan. Thus, the Canadian government is not able to track these Taiwanese-born Canadians either.

Consequently, this profile will focus on Canadians born in Canada or elsewhere (except Taiwan). We acknowledge that the omission of a significant number of Canadian citizens may result from such an approach. In addition, some of the Canadians born outside of Taiwan may also be excluded from the “best estimates” because

registration with the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei is voluntary.

### ***“Best Estimates” of Canadians living in Taiwan***

The Canadian Trade Office in Taipei estimates that there were about 22,500 Canadian citizens resident in Taiwan as of September 2008. This figure is based on the number

of passports compiled by the Canadian Trade Office. For its part, the Canadian Society in Taiwan (which will be described in Section Two) estimates that an additional 30,000 Canadian citizens live in Taiwan.

According to the official statistics released by the National Immigration Agency of Taiwan, in

September 2008, a total of 2,554 Canadians (1,845 males and 709 females) lived in Taiwan. As shown in Table 1, estimates of the number of Canadian residents in Taiwan vary substantially from year to year. Note that the number of Canadians who overstayed their visas is not included. Therefore, the actual numbers could be much larger.

Table 1: Estimates of Canadian Residents in Taiwan

End of Year	All Foreigners	Canadians
2001	<b>383,663</b>	2,069
2002	<b>405,751</b>	2,865
2003	<b>405,284</b>	2,853
2004	<b>423,456</b>	3,261
2005	<b>429,703</b>	3,259
2006	<b>428,240</b>	2,963
2007	<b>433,169</b>	2,722

Note: Overstayers not included

Source: National Immigration Agency, MOI

### ***Typical Canadians living in Taiwan***

The Taiwanese government records the occupations and the places of residence of Canadians in Taiwan (see Table 2 on following page).

As shown in Table 2, in 2001, the largest number of employed Canadians taught English as a Second Language, while others were mainly involved in business or worked in engineering.

Based on additional statistics made available by the Taiwanese government's National Immigration Agency, in 2007, out of 2,722 recorded Canadians, 2,104 were employed (78.8%). In comparison, 82% of all foreigners in Taiwan were employed. Males represented 70.5% of the Canadian population, compared to 37.7% of the overall foreign resident population in Taiwan. The dependency ratio was

11% for Canadian males and 14% for Canadian females. In contrast, the dependency ratio was 3% for all male foreigners and 11% for all foreign females.

As shown in Table 3 on the following page, the top six counties and cities in which Canadians resided in 2007 were Taipei City (940), Taipei County (377), Taiching City (304), Kaohsiung City (279), Taoyuan County (185), and Tainan City (115). These

cities were also home to the largest numbers of foreign residents in Taiwan.

Table 2: Foreign Residents by Nationality and Occupation, 2007

Status	All Foreigners		Canadians	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>163,575</b>	<b>269,594</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>802</b>
Age: 15 +	158,654	266,456	1,705	686
Labour Force	150,124	205,258	1,574	530
Gov't Employee	1	4	-	-
Business	3,394	358	97	11
Engineer	2,246	161	49	4
Accountant	9	10	1	-
Lawyer	21	3	2	1
Correspondent	31	8	2	-
Teacher	4,286	1,723	1,033	406
Doctor	211	68	1	-
Care Worker	1	20	-	-
Missionary	1,143	632	26	13
Skilled Worker	468	674	-	-
Foreign Labour	127,818	193,986	-	-
Seamen	352	2	-	-
Others	8,114	6,721	318	81
Unemployed	2,029	888	45	14
Not in Labour Force	8530	61198	131	156
Housekeeping	-	53,515	-	93
Student	8,395	7,659	130	63
Others	135	24	1	-
Age: 15 -	4,921	3,138	215	116

Source: *Ministry of the Interior Department, National Immigration Agency*

Table 3: All Foreigners and Canadians in Taiwan by Place of Residence, 2007

Place of Residence		
	All Foreigners	Canadians
Grand Total	433,169	2,722
Taiwan Prov.:	359,295	1,502
- Taipei County	61,960	<b>377</b>
- Yilan County	6,382	16
- Taoyuan County	77,730	<b>185</b>
- Hsinchu County	19,904	40
- Miaoli County	11,802	6
- Taichung County	32,595	50
- Changhua County	24,597	43
- Nantou County	7,860	28
- Yunlin County	10,070	23
- Chiayi County	7,342	12
- Tainan County	20,256	19
- Kaohsiung County	16,895	73
- Pingtung County	9,854	26
- Taitung County	1,844	10
- Hualien County	4,430	28
- Penghu County	1,083	3
- Keelung City	4,180	15
- Hsinchu City	10,872	93
- Taichung City	18,513	<b>304</b>
- Chiayi City	2,617	36
- Tainan City	8,509	<b>115</b>
Taipei City	54,675	<b>940</b>
Kaohsiung City	18,692	<b>279</b>
Fuchien Prov.	507	1
Kinmen County	391	1
Lienchiang County	116	—

Source: National Police Agency

## **B. Canadian Personalities and Organizations in Taiwan**

### ***Personalities: Media***

1. **Jacques van Wersch** is a Canadian from Toronto who spent over ten years in Taiwan as a news media professional. He worked at two newspapers (The Taipei Times and The Taiwan Review), the island's only English-language radio station (International Community Radio Taipei), and the television news room of the Eastern Broadcasting Company. He was the senior editor of the *Taiwan Review*. He now resides in Singapore, where he is a copy editor for Dow Jones Newswires.

2. Now based in Toronto, **Stephen Nelson** was a broadcast journalist and teacher in Taiwan for over eight years. He holds a master's degree in theology as well as a degree in journalism and still maintains links with Taiwan.

### ***Personalities: Commerce***

1. **Kim Fleming** moved to Taiwan on June 1, 2005. He is the Assistant General Manager of Manulife Financial in Taiwan. Previously he worked in the regional head office of Manulife Financial in Hong Kong.

2. **David Kuo** lived for over 13 years in Montreal, Quebec where he learned French and English and earned both his BComm and master's degree in Manufacturing Management from McGill University. He returned to his native Taiwan in 2000 and is currently working for Adexa Inc, a U.S. supply chain management software company. He has dedicated his time to assist Canadian alumni to reunite in Taiwan and has been the president of the McGill Taiwan Alumni Association since 2003. He was instrumental in planning the Canada D'eh 2005 event when over 180 people gathered to enjoy the celebration of Canada Day. In 2006, he was involved with several alumni associations and the Canadian Education Centre to form the Canadian Alumni Network in Taiwan. This network was founded to create a stronger Canadian alumni presence and to promote Canadian education in Taiwan through resource sharing and collaboration.

3. **Pierre Loisel Jr.** is Canadian-born and raised in Taiwan. He completed an engineering degree in Vancouver. He is heavily involved with the Canadian Society in Taiwan and contributes to the successful yearly Canada D'eh events.

Pierre is currently working as a project manager in the renewable energy sector of an independent power producer in Taiwan.

### ***Personalities: Entertainment***

1. **Angela Chang** was born in Taiwan, but moved to Canada with her family when she was 12. She participated in various singing contests while in Canada and began her career after she graduated from Vancouver's Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in 2000. So far she has recorded five albums and also pursues an acting career in Taiwan.

2. **Brandon Chang** was born in Toronto, Canada in 1982 and moved to Hong Kong when he was 14. The film star began his career as a model in Hong Kong in 1998 and, one year later, had the lead role in a Hong Kong teen drama called RTHK's Y2K. In his early 20s Mr. Chang moved back to Taipei, Taiwan. In 2001, he signed a music contract with Media Asia Entertainment Group, one of Asia's largest and most successful Chinese language film studios. He became an apprentice under Michelle Yeoh. He recently worked in two feature-length films.

3. **Jacky Chu** was born in Vancouver, Canada in 1979. He is a popular Taiwanese

actor and is a former member of Taiwanese pop group 183 Club. He began his singing career by entering the 1998 New Talent Singing Awards at the Vancouver audition, which he won. He then represented Vancouver in the international finals and finished first runner-up. After graduating from high school, he then moved to Taiwan to start his singing career and was signed by Universal Music Taiwan. He released his first solo album "Telling" in 2003. In 2005, he was signed by Warner Music Taiwan and was attached to the male singing quintet, 183 Club.

#### ***Personalities: Education***

**Shawn McClelland** has lived in Taipei, where he owns and manages a small chain of schools of English, for over eleven years. On the strength of his experience as an ESL teacher, he authored a series of books targeted at advanced learners of English for Oxford University Press. Mr. McClelland was also one of the first foreigners to promote and expand the music and entertainment scene in Taiwan, and continues to be active in the industry through his involvement in several nightclubs and other international music events.

#### ***Personalities: Other***

1. **Anthony van Dyck** lives in Taiwan and is one of two administrators of Forumosa.com, which started in 1999 with around 25 regular posters. Today, Forumosa.com is Taiwan's largest ex-pat website with almost 6,000 registered members, over 300,000 posted articles, and hundreds of visitors each day. The forums are used to discuss life in Taiwan, politics, and international news, amongst other topics. In recent years, it has served as a catalyst for bringing members of Taiwan's international community together in real life as well. In addition to his duties at Forumosa.com, Anthony runs a language school, serves on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Society and on the International Centre for Responsible Tourism Foreign Residents Advisory Board.

2. **Marcus Clinch** was born in Nova Scotia in 1973. This Canadian lawyer works in Taipei as a foreign legal consultant. His education includes an LL.B. from the University of New Brunswick, and an LL.M. in International Business Transactions from the Centre for Energy, Petroleum, and Mineral Law and Policy, University of Dundee, Scotland. He currently co-chairs the European Chamber

of Commerce and the Taipei Beverage Alcohol Committee.

3. The late **Dr. Peter Mackay** was born in Upper Canada in 1844. He arrived in Kaohsiung in 1871 as a Presbyterian minister. In Taiwan, he practiced dentistry, built 60 chapels and many schools, and raised money to open Oxford College, which later became a university. Perhaps his greatest contribution was to facilitate the development of medical centres in Taiwan and to establish a hospital in which Western medicine was first practiced. Today, the Mackay Memorial Hospital is one of the largest hospitals on the island, with branches in Taipei, Tamsui and Taitung. Mackay died in 1901 at the age of 57. He left a lasting and strong impression on the people of Taiwan.

#### ***Organizations: Business***

The **Alberta Taiwan Office** was established in 1998, when the Alberta government recognized Taiwan as an important market for development and business relationships. The Office aims to promote the Alberta Advantage to Taiwanese markets and enhance the trade and investment activities between Taiwan and Alberta. The Office also assists the Alberta public and private sectors in identifying

business opportunities in Taiwan and helps Taiwanese businesses to identify investment opportunities in Alberta by introducing them to potential partners and providing market and other investment-related information.

#### ***Organizations: Social Networking***

**The Canadian Society in Taiwan** was established by a group of Canadians in 1983 in the absence of official Canadian representation in Taiwan. The Society has grown from providing basic support services to meeting the needs of all Canadians and friends of Canada in Taiwan. One of the aims of the Canadian Society is to promote goodwill and understanding between the people of Canada and Taiwan, and to provide the opportunity for interaction to develop strong cultural, social and business ties. The Society was officially registered with the Ministry of the Interior as a foreign association in 1984.

#### ***Organizations: School Alumni***

**Canadian Alumni Network (CAN)** was established by five Canadian alumni associations (McGill University, Simon Fraser University, the University of

British Columbia, the University of Victoria and the University of Waterloo) and the Canadian Education Centre in April 2006. This network aims to facilitate and strengthen the collaboration between individual alumni associations within Taiwan. CAN assists alumni from Canadian schools in locating their alumni organization and provides them with social activities organized by other participating organizations.

### **C. Summary of Taiwanese Immigration and Citizenship Policies**

#### ***Types of Visa***

Currently, Canada does not have any preferential visa arrangements with the Taiwanese government for Canadians intending to work or live in Taiwan. However, Canadians do not need a visa to enter Taiwan for a period of 30 days or less, an exemption that the Taiwanese government extends to nationals of 31 other countries.

Four entry visas to Taiwan are available to foreign nationals: diplomatic, courtesy, resident, and visitor. Canadians seeking long-term residency can only apply for the resident visa.

The duration of the visa and length of stay, the number of entries, the purposes, the application requirements, the required documents, and other related items regarding the aforementioned types of visas are stipulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan. To obtain any of these visas, Canadians must apply directly to any of the Taipei Economic and Cultural offices located throughout Canada. These offices cannot, however, issue resident visas without the approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taiwan. Below is a brief description of each visa.

**Resident Visas** may be issued to holders of foreign passports who intend to stay in Taiwan for more than six months for family reunification, studies, employment, investments, missionary work, or other activities. This visa is only valid for three months.

Resident visa holders are required to apply for an Alien Resident Certificate at the police station of the city/county in which they live in Taiwan within 15 days after their arrival. Thereafter they may stay in Taiwan for as long as the Alien Resident Certificate, renewed yearly, remains valid.

Diplomatic Visas are issued to foreigners with diplomatic passports or laissez-passer, such as heads of state, personnel and officials of foreign governments and their dependants and entourage, where fitting, senior officials and diplomatic messengers.

Courtesy Visas are issued to the following foreign passport holders: former heads of state and other government officials and their dependants, personnel and employees of foreign governments and their dependants and entourage, where fitting, employees of international governmental organizations and their dependants, guests of the Taiwanese government and their dependants.

Visitor Visas are granted to holders of foreign passports who intend to stay in Taiwan for less than six months for the purpose of transit, sightseeing, visiting relatives, attending a training course, receiving medical treatment, engaging in business or other activities.

Youth Mobility Program Visa (also known as working holiday visa) is a new visa arrangement between Canada and Taiwan. Came into effect on July 1, 2010, this agreement allows people from Canada and people from

Taiwan the ability to work and travel in each other's countries. The agreement makes it easier for young people (ages 18 to 35) to travel and work within each country in specific industries for a period of up to one year.

### ***Taiwanese Nationality and Citizenship Policies***

#### ***I. Becoming a National and/or Citizen***

Nationality and citizenship are distinct concepts in Taiwan where obtaining nationality is a necessary step in the citizenship acquisition process. Once applicants become Taiwanese nationals, they have the right to reside and work in Taiwan without an Alien Resident Certificate and may apply for a Taiwanese ID card. Only after nationality status is acquired can individuals apply for citizenship and a household registration number.

According to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Vancouver, it is not common for foreigners to obtain Taiwanese nationality and then citizenship, but it is possible. Foreigners are not likely to apply for the Taiwanese nationality because the process is time-consuming and involves a certain degree of risk:

foreigners must renounce any previous nationality/citizenship and be stateless while their application is processed. Moreover, the granting of Taiwanese nationality is left to the discretion of a judge. Thus, foreigners who are not successful in obtaining the Taiwanese nationality may remain stateless. More information on this is provided in the section "*Foreign Nationals: Loss of Nationality by Birth.*"

To become a Taiwanese national, one of four conditions stipulated in the Nationality Act must be met: either parent was a national of the Republic of China when the individual was born; the individual was born after the death of one of the parents, and one of the parents was a national of the Republic of China at the time of death; the individual was born in the territory of the Republic of China, and the parents can't be ascertained or both were stateless persons; or the individual has undergone the nationalization process.

According to the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Vancouver, the fourth condition cited above can only be fulfilled through marriage. Taiwan clearly does not have an open immigration policy towards

foreigners without ethnic ties to Taiwan. However, foreigners with ethnic ties to Taiwan, as described in the first two conditions, can more easily become Taiwanese nationals.

## ***II. Nationalization Process***

Foreign nationals or stateless persons who have made Taiwan their home, or are domiciled in Taiwan can apply for nationalization if they meet the following conditions listed in Article 3 of the Nationality Act: residence in the territory of Taiwan for more than 183 days for over five continuous years; aged 20 years old or older and able to act in accordance with both the laws of Taiwan and the laws of their own country; decent behaviour and no record of crime; ownership of enough property or professional skills to be self-supporting; basic language ability in the Chinese language; basic understanding of Taiwan's rights and obligations.

The Ministry of the Interior in Taiwan sets the standards of determination, testing, exemption from testing, and other matters to be observed regarding the basic language ability and basic knowledge of Taiwan's rights and

obligations listed in the above paragraph.

Based on Article 4, foreign nationals or stateless persons who reside in the territory of Taiwan, meet the prerequisites listed in Article 3, and have legally resided in Taiwan more than 183 days every year for more than three continuous years, can also apply for nationalization provided they meet one of the following conditions: they are the spouse of a national of Taiwan, a child of a parent who was once a national of Taiwan or an adopted child of Taiwanese-born parents, or born in Taiwan.

## ***III. Foreign Nationals: Loss of Nationality by Birth***

Foreign nationals must be willing to relinquish any other nationality or citizenship in order to apply to become Taiwanese. In Article 9 it is stated that "a foreign national who applies for nationalization according to Article 3 to Article 7 shall provide the certification of his/her loss of previous nationality." Once foreign nationals become Taiwanese citizens, however, they can reapply for their previous citizenship and become dual nationals.

Foreign-born Taiwanese nationals have no right to hold important government offices listed in Article 10. These offices include president, vice-president, legislator, deputy minister, etc.

## ***IV. Foreigners without ethnic ties to Taiwan who seek Taiwanese Citizenship***

Foreigners without ethnic ties to Taiwan can only become Taiwanese nationals through marriage, but one does not become Taiwanese immediately after marrying. After getting married female foreign nationals need to apply for household registration and maintain residence in Taiwan for 11 months before becoming eligible for a Taiwanese ID card and Taiwanese citizenship. Male foreign nationals may only obtain Taiwan citizenship after marrying a Taiwanese citizen and having resided in Taiwan for three years.

The numbers of foreign nationals who acquired Taiwanese citizenship by country of origin in 2007 are presented in Table 4. There are no recorded statistics on Canadians either seeking Taiwanese nationality nor on those who became citizens.

Table 4. Taiwanese Citizenship Acquisition by Foreigners

Year	Sex	Grand Total	Indonesia	Thailand	Vietnam	Cambodia
	Male	94	20	2	13	1
2007	Female	10,670	1,273	116	8,213	830

*Source : Department of Household Registration Affairs, MOI*

***Dual Citizenship and Taiwanese-born Canadians***

Dual citizens have the same responsibilities as Taiwanese nationals in Taiwan. Thus, Taiwanese-born Canadian males between the ages of 18 and 36 are required to serve in

the military for two years if they reside in Taiwan. Overseas residents are required to serve in the military if they are between 18 and 36 years of age upon returning to Taiwan.

Taiwanese-born Canadians can vote in Taiwanese

elections. Moreover, dual citizens residing overseas are not required to pay taxes to the Taiwanese government. Lastly, Taiwanese-born Canadians are exempt from jury duty in Taiwan.

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<sup>1</sup> An early version of this report was initially prepared by Victor Yan and presented by Dr. Diane Coulombe at the Conference on Selected Profiles of Canadians Abroad organized by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada in June 2009. It was updated by Heather Kincaide in November, 2010. Critical comments from the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office in Vancouver are gratefully acknowledged.