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TAIWANESE PUBLIC OPINION ON FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

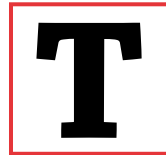
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada
in partnership with RIWI

OCTOBER 2020

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ABOUT THE ASIA PACIFIC FOUNDATION OF CANADA



The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APF Canada) is a not-for-profit organization focused on Canada's relations with Asia. Our mission is to be Canada's catalyst for engagement with Asia and Asia's bridge to Canada. APF Canada is dedicated to strengthening ties between Canada and Asia with a focus on seven thematic areas: trade and investment, surveys and polling, regional security, digital technologies, domestic networks, sustainable development, and Asia Competency.

Our research provides high-quality, relevant, and timely information, insights, and perspectives on Canada-Asia relations. Providing policy considerations and business intelligence for stakeholders across the Asia Pacific, our work includes Reports, Policy Briefs, Case Studies, Dispatches, and a regular Asia Watch newsletter that together support these thematic areas.

APF Canada also works with business, government, and academic stakeholders to provide custom research, data, briefings and Asia Competency training for Canadian organizations. Consulting services are available by request. We would be pleased to work with you to meet your research and business intelligence needs.

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ABOUT RIWI



RIWI believes in making every voice count, including those usually underrepresented and disengaged. RIWI technology allows for the rapid capture and assessment of large samples of broad, truly randomized opinion and perceptions data on an ongoing basis. RIWI delivers opt-in surveys to non-incented web users who are surfing online, with access to the entire global internet population. No personally identifiable information is ever collected from respondents, and no response is traceable to an individual. RIWI grew out of the University of Toronto, and now works with partners across the globe on today's critical issues.

To learn more, contact RIWI at ask@riwi.com or visit them online at www.riwi.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has created some very real challenges globally. At this juncture, Taiwan has emerged as a leader with its effective management of the COVID-19 pandemic within its borders.

After years of increasing isolation on the global stage, Taiwan's status has recently soared around the world as a result of its agile diplomacy. And due to the increasing U.S.-China confrontation and the protests and political unrest in Hong Kong, Taiwan has attracted considerable interest as an alternative market in the region for Western companies.

To understand public perspectives on the current developments in the island jurisdiction of Taiwan, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada partnered with RIWI to conduct a short, online, anonymous public opinion poll. In this report, we document the opinions shared by 1,088 Taiwanese respondents on various issues, such as the Hong Kong National Security Law and Taiwan's national security, strategic position, foreign policies, and significant regional partners, including Taiwanese opinion on Canada.

- 1. The majority of the Taiwanese public feels that the Hong Kong National Security Law constitutes a national security threat for Taiwan.** This survey found that 66% of the Taiwanese public are extremely to slightly concerned about the implications of the National Security Law for Taiwan. Furthermore, 57% of Taiwan's public feel that with the implementation of the Hong Kong National Security

Law, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has violated the constitutional principle of “one country, two systems.”

- 2. Respondents who identify as Taiwanese and/or Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) supporters indicate more concern for Taiwan’s national security following the enactment of the Hong Kong National Security Law than those who selected another identity and/or political affiliation.** Among the respondents who identify as Taiwanese, 75% express concerns about the implications of the Hong Kong National Security Law for Taiwan’s national security, compared to 38% of respondents who identify as Chinese, and 46% of those who identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese. Similarly, 78% of respondents who self-identify as DPP supporters indicate they are concerned, as opposed to 42% of the Kuomintang (KMT) supporters.
- 3. Good economic relations with the People’s Republic of China is an integral part of Taiwan’s future economic prosperity.** Overall, 59% of Taiwan’s public believe that good economic relations with the PRC is important for Taiwan. However, there is a major difference in opinion based on political support, as only 37% of DPP supporters feel the PRC is significant, as opposed to 76% of KMT supporters.
- 4. Both security ties with the United States and economic ties with the PRC are vital to strengthening Taiwan’s strategic position.** Even though 30% of the respondents felt that both were important, 23% exclusively chose security ties with the United States, while 22% just chose

economic ties with the PRC. Interestingly, 24% of the respondents said neither country was significant for Taiwan.

5. **The Taiwanese public chose the United States, the PRC, and Japan as the most significant regional partners for Taiwan's foreign policy.** The United States was chosen by 46% of the respondents, whereas only around 38% of the respondent chose the PRC, followed closely by Japan with 36%.

6. **The majority of the Taiwanese public don't know enough about Canada.** In this study, 53% of the Taiwanese public report that they are not aware enough about Canada to consider whether the North American country is an ally. Among the remainder, even though 26% feel that Canada is a good friend to Taiwan, there are 21% who feel the contrary. This feeling is also reflected by the fact that only 17% of the survey respondents think that Canada is an important regional partner for Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION

In many ways, 2020 has been a watershed year for Taiwan. The Tsai Ing-wen administration's effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the jurisdiction's effective governance structure to the rest of the world. As larger regional economies such as Japan struggled with pandemic containment, communication, and response, Taipei emerged as a world leader with respect to its effective use of travel restrictions, contact tracing, and pandemic-related messaging. Outside the media spotlight for many years, Taiwan is now a recognized global leader with respect to public health. Calls to ensure Taiwan's participation and representation in international forums and institutions such as the World Health Organization are growing and present a very real opportunity for Taipei to increase its visibility on the global stage.

Indeed, the Tsai administration has also raised Taiwan's status among Western nations in 2020, with both the United States and European Union member states demonstrating clear support for the jurisdiction. In August 2020, for instance, the Trump administration's Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, travelled to Taiwan in what amounted to the most senior active U.S. government official to visit the island since the 1970s. Not to be outdone, Czech Senate President Milos Vystrcil, while addressing Taiwan's parliament, declared, "I am Taiwanese" in a show of solidarity and support for Taipei. While anodyne displays of bilateral solidarity are common for nearly all states, such demonstrations of state-level support are rare – indeed, previously non-existent – for Taiwan.

Not all developments for Taipei, however, have been positive. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has responded to growing Western support for Taiwan with demonstrations and threats of force, most notably the deployment of fighter jets across the Taiwan Strait's median point during Secretary Azar's visit. Further, Beijing's July 2020 implementation of a National Security Law in Hong Kong has drawn the "one country, two systems" formulation – one of the foundational concepts informing PRC-Taiwan contemporary relations – into question. These developments suggest a shift in the current status quo of PRC-Taiwan relations, all at a time when the Xi Jinping administration has indicated its strategic "patience" over the "Taiwan question" is wearing thin.

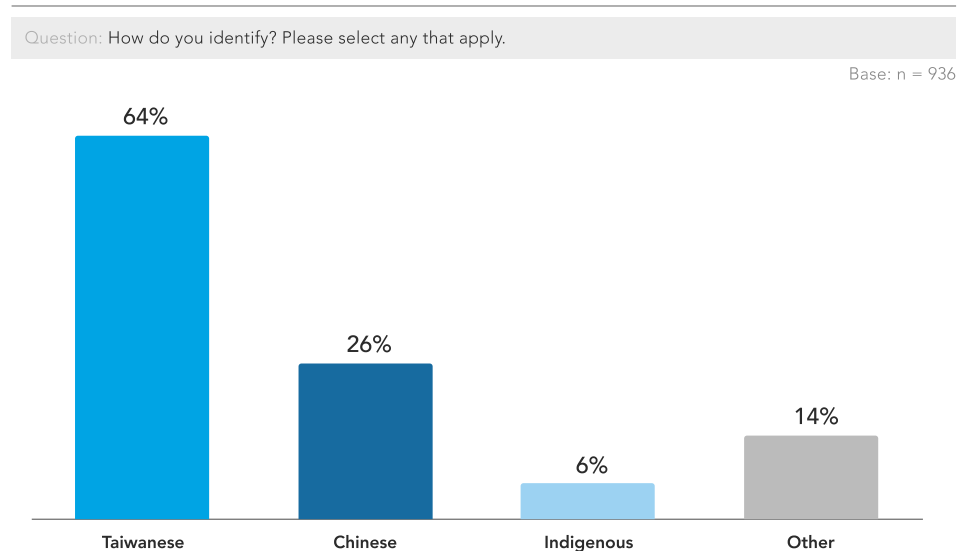
For better or worse, the ground on which Taiwan's foreign policy toward the PRC is based is shifting. Along with growing Western support for Taiwan's international position, much is uncertain about Taiwan's national and foreign policy future.

To provide some insight into current developments around Taiwan, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada (APF Canada), together with RIWI, conducted an anonymous online survey to determine the Taiwanese public's perspectives on Hong Kong's National Security Law, Asia's post-COVID-19 geopolitical landscape, and the jurisdiction's foreign policy priorities. Conducted over the month of August 2020, APF Canada received 1,088 responses from across Taiwan. The survey's findings are summarized below.

TAIWANESE PUBLIC OPINION ON IDENTITY

Identity can play a crucial role when analyzing public perceptions. In Taiwan, the democratization process in the 1980s and 1990s facilitated the emergence of a growing consciousness around a specific national identity that is not based on ethnicity and historical experiences, but rather is influenced by the development of political institutions and rapport with the PRC. But as the concept of identity nevertheless lacks clarity, we asked the public to provide a response to whether they identify as Taiwanese, Chinese, Indigenous, any combination of those three, or “Other” (similar to the Election Study Center at National Chengchi University polls). Our results confirm previous findings, with the majority of respondents identifying as Taiwanese (64%), while 26% identify as Chinese. Around 6% of the respondents also identify as Indigenous, a category seldom provided in previous public opinion polls of the Taiwanese public.

FIGURE 1
Majority of Taiwan’s public identify as Taiwanese



Overall, 86% of the respondents chose to identify as Taiwanese, Chinese, and/or Indigenous. The remaining 14% of the respondents identified as “Other,” which may signal Taiwan’s growing position in the global economy and migrant population.

Since respondents could choose multiple identity categories among Taiwanese, Chinese, and Indigenous, breaking down the identity category even further, we find that 57% identify as only Taiwanese, 19% identify as only Chinese, and 4% identify as only Indigenous. Meanwhile, about 43 respondents (5%) identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese. The remaining 1.3% of the respondents identify in various combinations (see Table 1).

For the purposes of analysis, we have made a distinction between three identity categories: Taiwanese,¹ Chinese,¹ and both Taiwanese and Chinese.² Since the sample size for the other identity groups are relatively smaller, unless relevant, they are not discussed in this report.

TABLE 1: TAIWAN PUBLIC OPINION AND IDENTITY

Identity Choices	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Only Taiwanese	529	56.5%
Only Chinese	182	19.4%
Taiwanese and Chinese	43	4.6%
Indigenous	37	4.0%
Indigenous and Taiwanese	8	0.9%
Taiwanese, Chinese, and Indigenous	3	0.3%
Indigenous and Chinese	1	0.1%
Other	133	14.2%
TOTAL	936	100%

¹ Excludes respondents who chose “Both Taiwanese and Chinese,” but may include respondents who have also identified as Indigenous.

² Includes respondents who may also identify as Indigenous.

We find that Taiwanese is the predominant choice across all age groups, followed by Chinese, Other, and then Indigenous. Within the Chinese category, we find a significant difference between the age groups, as 42% of the respondents who chose Chinese were above the age of 55 (n=154). Among the respondents who identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese, the majority (74%) were above the age of 45 (n=48).

A large proportion of the respondents in this study identify their political support as “Others” (35%),³ while around 28% identify their support for “Independents” (n=625). But around 13% identify as Kuomintang (KMT) supporters, and 11% identify as Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) supporters. The rest of the respondents were spread out among Taiwan’s People Party (4%), New Power Party (4%), Taiwan Statebuilding Party (3%), and People First Party (1%).

Identity was found to have a significant association with political support as well. Among the Taiwanese identifying respondents, 17% support DPP, 10% support KMT, but 30% chose Others, and 29% chose Independents. This large proportion of respondents choosing to opt for either Independents and Others is also found among respondents who identify as Chinese. While 22% of Chinese identifying respondents exhibit support for KMT, and only 4% support DPP, around 35% express their support for Independents, and 30% said Others. Furthermore, 44% of the respondents who identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese support KMT, 8% support DPP, but, 32% chose Independents and 12% chose Others.

³ The selection of “Others” can potentially indicate sensitivity to the survey subject.

TAIWANESE PUBLIC OPINION ON THE HONG KONG NATIONAL SECURITY LAW

The Hong Kong National Security Law, which was instituted on June 30, 2020, is perhaps one of the most pertinent topics of discussion in the context of PRC-Taiwan relations. We posed a question seeking to gauge the Taiwanese public on their awareness of the implementation of the law and included a short description, elaborating on the four types of offences outlined in it: secession or undermining national unification; subversion of state power; terrorist activities; and, collusion with foreign countries or entities to undermine national security.

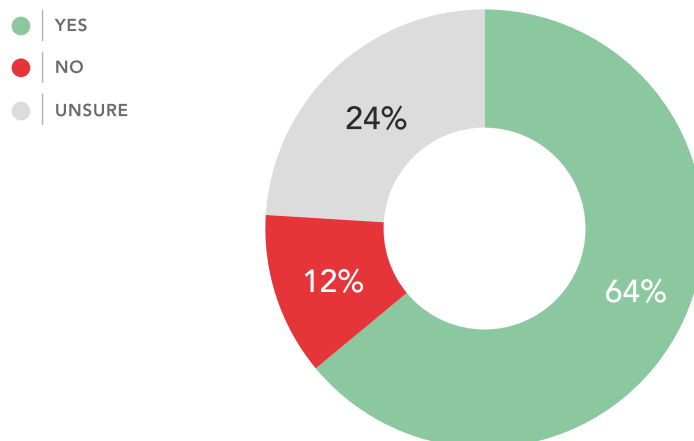
We found that the majority (64%) of the respondents (n=1,088) had heard about the law's implementation, but around 24% said they were unsure. A comparatively smaller proportion of people said they had not heard of the law or its implementation. There was a significant difference in response across gender, as 71% of male respondents, compared to 54% of female respondents, said "yes," they have heard about the law.

FIGURE 2

The majority of the respondents are aware of the Hong Kong National Security Law

Question: Have you heard about the implementation of the National Security Law in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region?

Base: n = 1,088



When comparing responses by individuals' education levels, it was found that respondents are aware of the implementation of the National Security Law in Hong Kong, but there are small differences between each education level. Among the respondents with an associate's degree (equivalent to an advanced diploma in Canada), 85% said "Yes," they have heard of the law, as compared to 70% with bachelor's degrees and 60% with master's degrees or above. What is curious to note here is that around 28% of those with higher education, such as graduate degrees, said they are unsure about the law.

We further asked respondents to reflect upon the implications of the National Security Law, and 57% of the Taiwanese public feels that the PRC has violated the "one country, two systems" principle that was instituted in 1997 for Hong Kong after it became a Special Administrative Region. This principle was also suggested by Beijing to Taipei as a way to accommodate its current de facto independence and democratic political system in an eventual PRC-Taiwan reunification. The principle is, however, rejected by most Taiwanese.

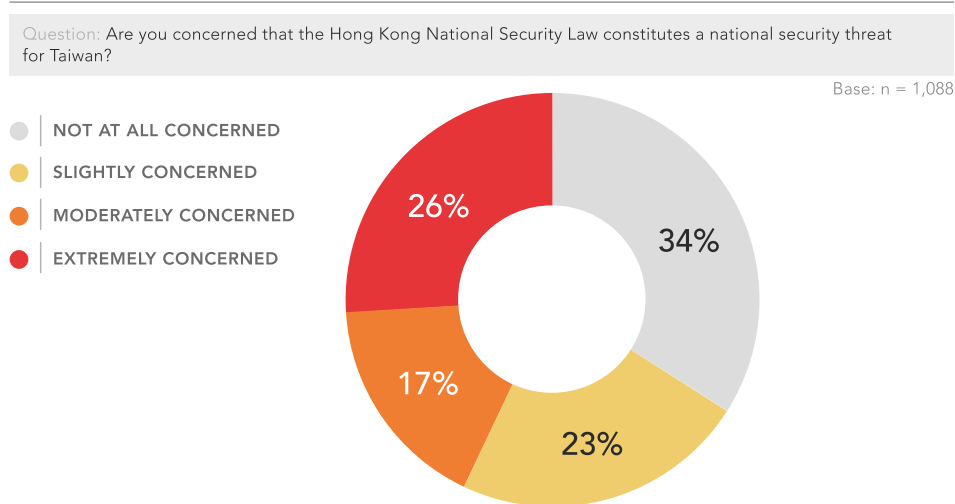
According to an August 2020 survey conducted for the Mainland Affairs Council in Taiwan, more than half of the Taiwan public support the recent establishment of an office to assist Hong Kongers affected by the new National Security Law imposed by Beijing on the territory.

In the current poll, we find that there are mixed opinions about whether the Hong Kong National Security Law constitutes a national security threat for Taiwan; however, 66% of respondents were extremely to slightly concerned about that possibility. At the same time, 34% of the public are "not at all concerned" that the events in Hong Kong pose the possibility of a national security threat for Taiwan (see Figure 3).

There is a significant positive correlation between concerns for Taiwan’s national security and agreement that the PRC has violated the “one country, two systems” principle. Respondents who believe that the PRC has violated the “one country, two systems” principle are also more likely to see the implementation of the National Security Law in Hong Kong as constituting a national security threat for Taiwan.

FIGURE 3

Taiwanese are concerned that the Hong Kong National Security Law constitutes a national security threat for Taiwan



On average, we found that the Taiwanese respondents with primary-level education expressed more concern than those with higher educational levels.

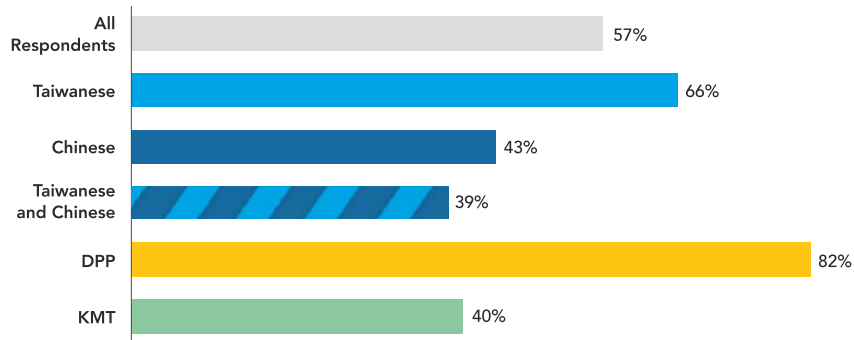
Respondents who identified as Taiwanese were found more likely than those who identified as Chinese to agree that the PRC violated the “one country, two systems” principle (see Figure 4). Similarly, Taiwanese-identifying respondents expressed a higher level of concern that the PRC’s actions in Hong Kong constitute a national security threat for Taiwan.

FIGURE 4

Taiwan’s public largely agrees that the PRC has violated the “one country, two systems” principle by implementing the National Security Law in Hong Kong, but opinions differ across identity and political support

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The People’s Republic of China has violated the “one country, two systems” principle by implementing the National Security Law in Hong Kong.

Base: All Respondents (n = 1,088); Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); DPP (n = 56); KMT (n = 69)



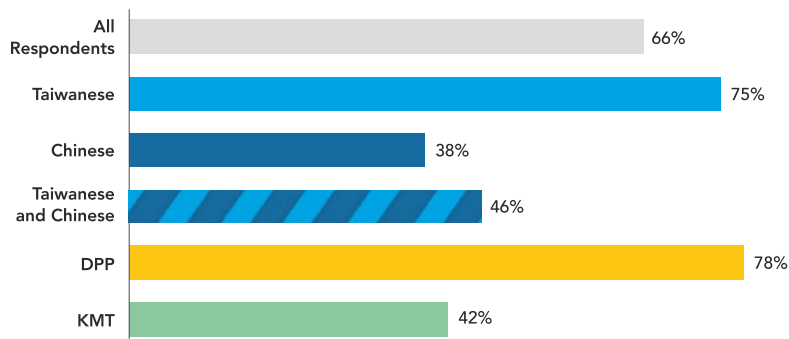
Respondents also tended to differ based on their political support. Most DPP supporters agreed that the PRC violated the “one country, two systems” policy and also expressed a high level of concern that the national security law bore national security implications for Taiwan (see Figures 4 and 5). On the opposite end of the spectrum, KMT supporters were the least likely to agree with the first statement, and about 42% expressed some concern about the Hong Kong National Security Law posing a national security threat for Taiwan.

FIGURE 5

Taiwan’s public expresses concerns that the Hong Kong National Security Law increases the national security threat for Taiwan

Question: Are you concerned that the Hong Kong National Security Law constitutes a national security threat for Taiwan?

Base: All Respondents (n = 1,088); Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); DPP (n = 56); KMT (n = 69)



TAIWANESE PUBLIC OPINION ON CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES

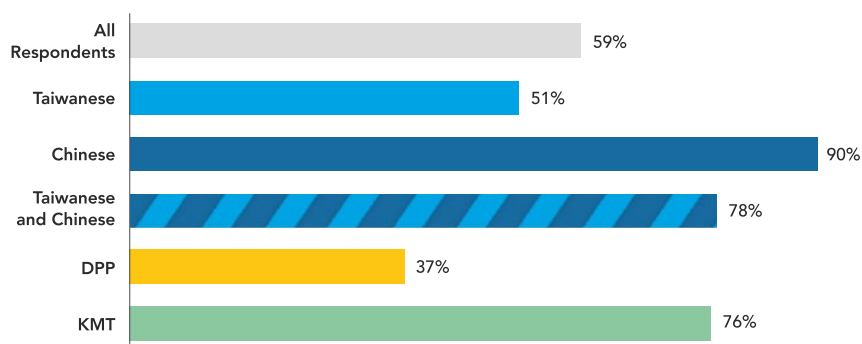
Despite the reservations about the People's Republic of China in relation to the Hong Kong National Security Law, as expressed by a majority of the respondents, we found that 59% of the respondents believe that good economic relations with the PRC is a central part of Taiwan's future economic prosperity. To break it down politically, more DPP supporters on average disagree with the statement (see Figure 6). Meanwhile, KMT supporters, and respondents who identified their support for the People First Party, expressed most agreement with the statement.

FIGURE 6

Majority of Taiwanese public agree that the PRC plays a significant role in Taiwan's future economic prosperity

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: *Taiwan's economic relations with the People's Republic of China is a central part of Taiwan's future economic prosperity.*

Base: All Respondents (n = 1,088); Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); DPP (n = 56); KMT (n = 69)

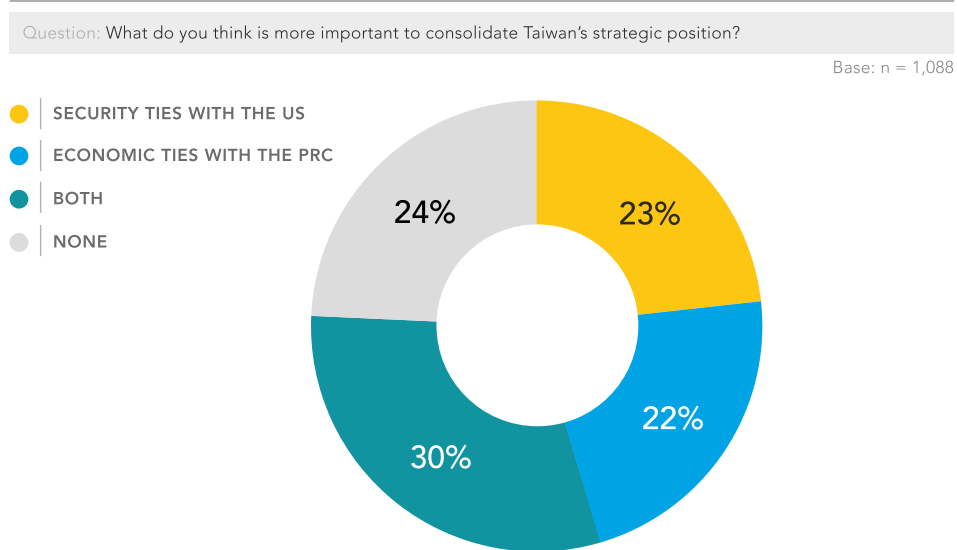


When asked to prioritize whether security ties with the United States or economic ties with the PRC were of more importance, 30% of the Taiwanese public said both are important. But 23%

were inclined toward security ties with the United States, and 22% were inclined toward economic ties with the PRC as being more important. Interestingly, around 24% of the respondents said “none,” implying neither was significant for Taiwan (see Figure 7).

FIGURE 7

Both security ties with the United States and economic ties with the PRC are important to consolidate Taiwan’s strategic position



We found that being male or female had a statistically significant association with responses to what’s more important for Taiwan’s strategic position. Both respondents who identified as male (31%) and those who identified as female (29%) were most likely to say that both economic ties with the PRC and security ties with the United States are important for Taiwan, but more female respondents (27%) than male (21%) felt that security ties with the United States are important to Taiwan, while more male (27%) than female (16%) respondents felt that economic ties with the PRC are important for Taiwan.

Furthermore, in light of the different national approaches to managing the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents were also asked

if they believe that the pandemic will accelerate the U.S.'s declining global status, the pandemic will boost the PRC's position on the global stage, both situations will occur, or none of them are likely. It was found that 49% of the respondents believed that neither of the situation is likely to occur, while 24% believe that both will occur. Around 16% think that the pandemic will accelerate the U.S.'s declining global status, while 11% feel the pandemic will boost the PRC's position on the global stage.

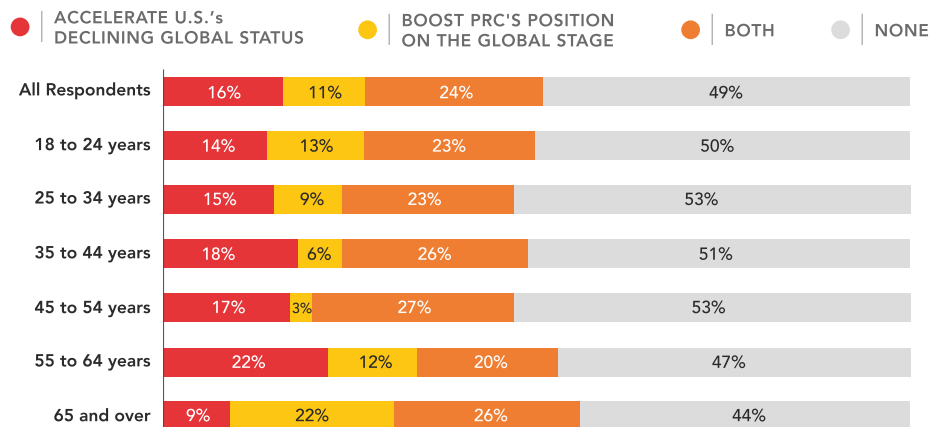
There is a statistically significant difference in responses between the different age groups. We found that while most of the respondents across all age groups tended to believe that neither of the situation is likely, within the 45 to 54 age group, around 17% think that the US's declining global status will accelerate, while only 3% think that the PRC's global position will receive a boost. Similarly, 22% of the 55 to 64 age group also believe that the U.S.'s declining global status will accelerate.

FIGURE 8

Middle-aged respondents are more likely than young adults or seniors to agree that the U.S.'s global status will decline further

Question: Based on each country's management of the COVID-19 pandemic, do you agree with either of the following statements? COVID-19 pandemic will...

Base: All Respondents (n = 1,088); 18 to 24 (n = 112); 25 to 34 (n = 164); 35 to 44 (n = 181); 45 to 54 (n = 170); 55 to 64 (n = 137); 65 and over (n = 183)



Based on respondents' choice of Taiwanese or Chinese identity, we also found significant differences in opinions on the United States' and China's importance for Taiwan, and the U.S.-China position in the post-pandemic world (see Figure 9).

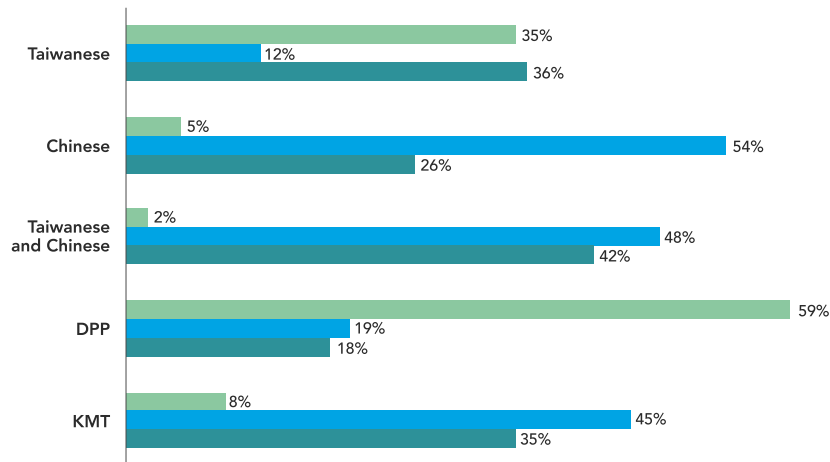
FIGURE 9

Identity and political support play a crucial role in support for the United States or China

Base: Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); DPP (n = 56); KMT (n = 69)

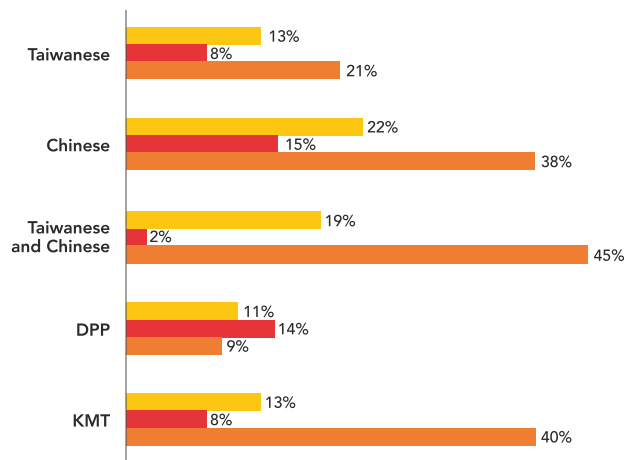
Question: What do you think is more important to consolidate Taiwan's strategic position?

● SECURITY TIES WITH THE U.S. ● ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE PRC ● BOTH



Question: Based on each country's management of the COVID-19 pandemic, do you agree with either of the following statements? The COVID-19 pandemic will...

● ACCELERATE U.S.'s DECLINING GLOBAL STATUS ● BOOST PRC's POSITION ON THE GLOBAL STAGE ● BOTH



PUBLIC OPINION ON TAIWAN'S REGIONAL PARTNERS

The United States and the PRC are the top two regional partners considered by Taiwan's public as essential to their nation's foreign policy. It is interesting to observe that the difference in choices of regional partners had a significant association with the respondents' gender. The majority of the male respondents (57%) were likely *not* to choose the United States as an important regional partner for Taiwan's foreign policy, compared to just 48% of the female respondents.

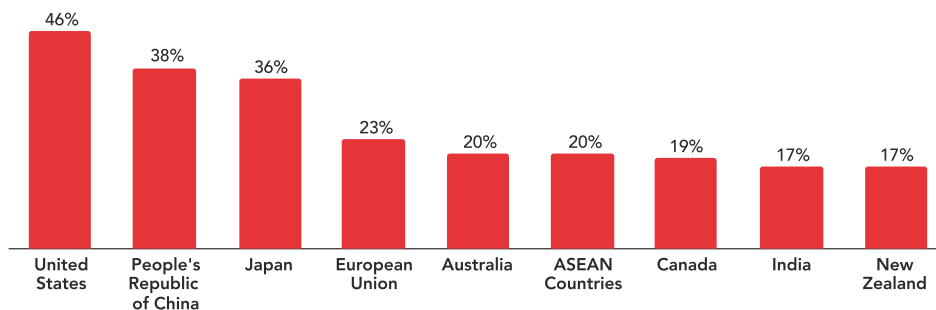
There is also a significant association between respondents' education level and their position on Australia, the European Union, India, Canada, ASEAN countries, and New Zealand as regional partners. Respondents with associate's or bachelor's degrees were more likely to select these countries as an important regional partner than were respondents with other levels of education, except for respondents with primary education. Among respondents with primary education, many chose New Zealand and ASEAN as important regional partners.

FIGURE 10

Taiwanese public opinion on regional partners most integral to Taiwan's foreign policy

Question: Among the following, which regional partners do you believe are the most integral part of Taiwan's foreign policy? Please select any that apply.

Base: n = 960

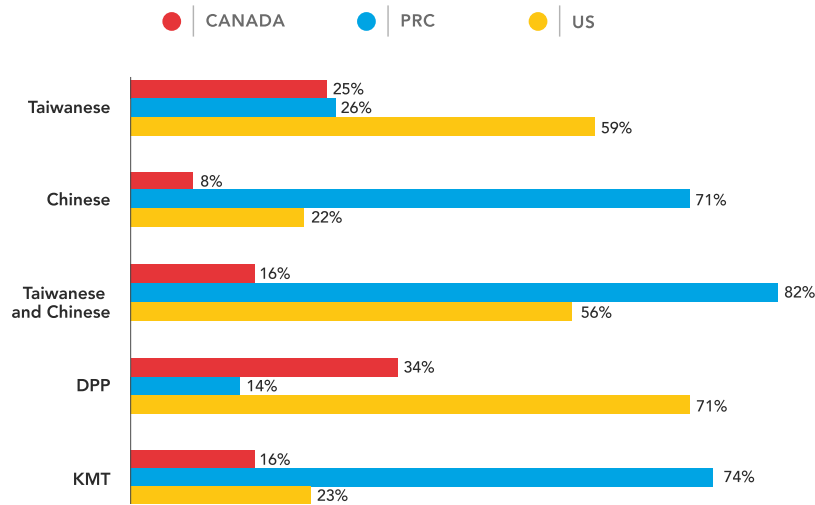


Taking a closer look at the Taiwanese public’s opinion on the United States, the PRC, and Canada, we find that across the board, respondents don’t consider Canada as a significant regional partner for Taiwan, but those who identify as Taiwanese and/or DPP supporters are more in favour of Canada. Those who identify as Taiwanese mostly chose the United States, while those who identify as Chinese mostly chose the PRC as an important regional partner for Taiwan. But among respondents who identify as both Taiwanese and Chinese, even though 82% chose the PRC, around 56% chose the United States (see Figure 11).

FIGURE 11
Taiwanese public’s support for Canada, the PRC, and the United States as regional partners integral to Taiwan’s foreign policy

Question: Among the following, which regional partners do you believe are the most integral part of Taiwan’s foreign policy? Please select any that apply.

Base: Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); DPP (n = 56); KMT (n = 69)



In terms of foreign policy, the Taiwanese government, under President Tsai Ing-wen, instituted the New Southbound Policy in 2016. The policy is aimed at increasing trade with the 10 ASEAN economies (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), six South

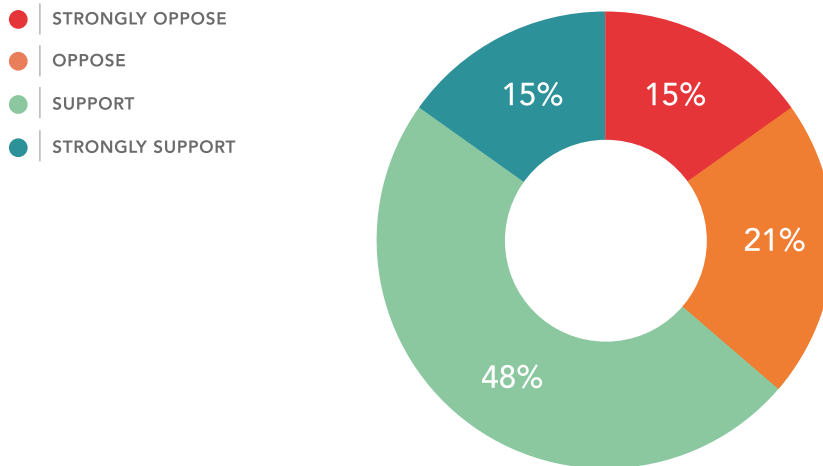
Asian countries (including India), and Australia and New Zealand. Taiwan’s public largely supports the policy (63%, see Figure 12), but less than 20% of the respondents consider any of these countries as a significant regional partner (see Figure 10). Furthermore, those with graduate degrees are inclined to oppose the policy more than are respondents with lower education levels. Respondents who identify as Taiwanese were also in support of the policy, more than were those who chose other identity categories.

FIGURE 12

Taiwanese public largely support President Tsai Ing-wen’s “New Southbound Policy”

Question: How strongly do you support or oppose President Tsai Ing-Wen’s “New Southbound Policy”? Launched in 2016, it aims at increasing trade and cultural relations with 10 ASEAN member states, six South Asian countries, Australia and New Zealand.

Base: n = 1,088



Not surprisingly, with 88% of the respondents who identify themselves as affiliated with the Democratic Progressive Party supporting the policy, on average, DPP supporters show the highest amount of support for the policy. But 49% of Kuomintang supporters also express support for President Tsai Ing-wen’s 2016 policy.



TAIWANESE PUBLIC OPINION ON CANADA

The Taiwanese public has seldom been asked about their perspectives and perceptions of Canada. In our poll and analysis, we found that 53% of the respondents “don’t know enough” about Canada to consider whether Canada is an ally for Taiwan. This reveals the need to consider building awareness about Canada, not only as a country but also as a brand facilitating Canadian exports of products and services, and as a potential market for Taiwanese businesses. A lack of awareness of Canada has been a significant deterring factor for Asian businesses, as APF Canada found in its recent survey of business leaders across six Asian economies.

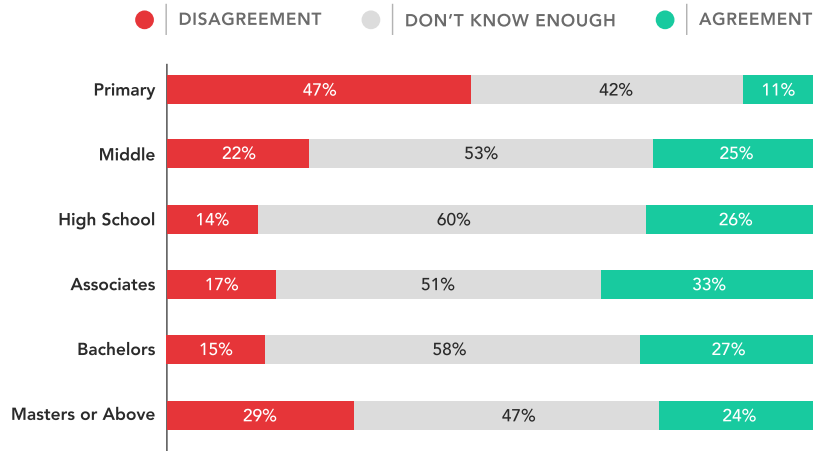
About 26% of respondents feel that Canada is an important ally for Taiwan, while 21% disagree with that statement. Further analysis suggests that there is a significant difference in responses across the different education levels, as we observe a significant difference between respondents with graduate degrees and those with just high-school or bachelor’s degrees. Those with high-school degrees (60%) and bachelor’s degrees (58%) are more likely to say they “don’t know enough” about Canada than those with master’s degrees or above (47%). Interestingly, 29% of those with graduate degrees are unlikely to consider Canada as an important ally for Taiwan.

FIGURE 13

Taiwanese public across all education groups don't know enough about Canada

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Canada is an important ally for Taiwan today. If you don't know enough about Canada, please also indicate this.

Base: Primary (n = 27); Middle (n = 35); High School (n = 152); Associates (n = 95); Bachelors (n = 261); Masters or Above (n = 183)



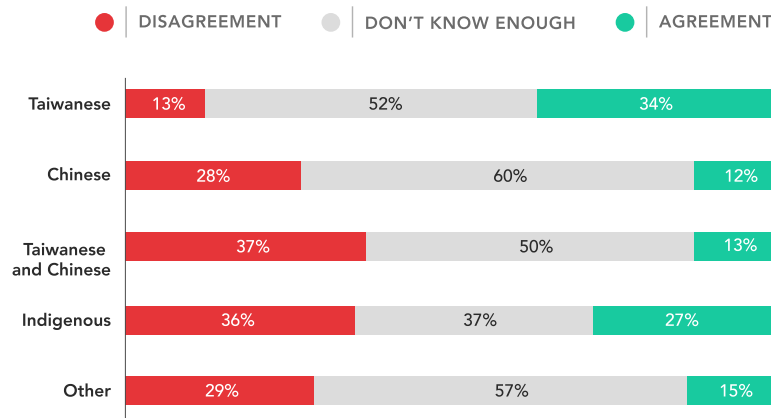
Respondents who identified as Taiwanese (34%) or Indigenous (27%) were also found to consider Canada as an important ally, unlike those who identified as Chinese (14%) or both Taiwanese and Chinese (13%).

FIGURE 14

Taiwanese- or Indigenous-identifying respondents see Canada as an important ally

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Canada is an important ally for Taiwan today. If you don't know enough about Canada, please also indicate this.

Base: Taiwanese (n = 450); Chinese (n = 154); Taiwanese and Chinese (n = 48); Indigenous (n = 30); Other (n = 107)



CONCLUSION



After years of increasing isolation on the global stage, Taiwan's status has recently soared around the world as a result of its agile diplomacy and the efficiency of its responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. And due to the increasing U.S.-China confrontation and the protests and political unrest in Hong Kong, Taiwan has attracted considerable interest as an alternative market in the region for Western companies.

As many countries around the world are increasingly pressed to rethink their approach to Taiwan due to the current geopolitical tensions and in the interest of trade diversification – reflected in the discussion around its inclusion in the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) – it is more important than ever to understand Taiwan's perspectives on the recently enacted Hong Kong National Security Law, the post-COVID-19 geopolitical landscape, and the economy's foreign policy priorities. Taiwan's public opinion on these critical issues will have significant implications for the foreign policy of many countries, including Canada.

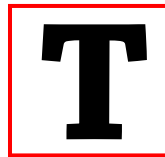
As this is the first time APF Canada has conducted this survey, no baseline for comparison is available. However, similar to previous polls, such as the Taiwan National Security Survey (TNSS) conducted by the Election Study Center at the National Chengchi University in partnership with the Program in Asian Security Studies at Duke University, the survey results highlight the complexity and entanglement of Taiwan's relationship with the PRC. For example, despite a majority of Taiwanese residents supporting the recent establishment of an office to assist Hong

Kong residents affected by the new National Security Law, the survey illustrates how Taiwan's public is only moderately concerned about the law enacted in Hong Kong. Furthermore, only 57% feel that the National Security Law has violated the "one country, two systems" principle, which constitutes the basis on which the PRC has proposed a reunification with Taiwan.

Regarding Taiwanese citizens' perspectives on the PRC's and the U.S.'s economic and strategic importance, we found that 59% see China as a central part of Taiwan's future economic prosperity, although with a significant variation according to the political party the respondent supports (DPP vs KMT). Also interesting is the split between whether security ties with the United States or economic ties with China are a priority for Taiwan's strategic position.

Finally, and of immediate relevance for Canadian policy-makers, a majority of Taiwanese people do not consider Canada as a significant regional partner. Most respondents chose the United States, China, and Japan as a partner most integral to Taiwan's foreign policy. Furthermore, one out of two Taiwanese (53%) claim not to know enough about Canada to consider the country as a potential ally. This lack of awareness is reciprocal. APF Canada's 2018 [*National Opinion Poll*](#) shows that Canadians are generally not aware of Taiwan and underestimate its economic importance. APF Canada's 2020 *National Opinion Poll* shows that Canadians continue to share similar feelings toward Taiwan and its economic importance as they did in 2018. But the proportion of the Canadian public that is aware of Taiwan is increasing, along with their support for the Canadian government expanding relations with Taiwan despite the possibility of issues in Canada-China relations. These results have significant implications as Canada further develops its foreign policy and trade diversification strategy for the region.

METHODOLOGY



The Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada partnered with RIWI to poll Taiwan's public (18 years or older) on various pertinent issues. The research team at APF Canada framed the survey instrument, in consultation with RIWI. The anonymous online survey was translated into traditional Chinese and administered by RIWI in Taiwan from August 6 to August 31, 2020. Initially, the online survey was accessed by over 6,000 people in Taiwan. The survey asked 13 questions in total, and 1,088 respondents completed the core questions. The average completion time for the survey was 2.07 minutes (124 seconds). Weights are applied to age and gender as per the most recent national census data available, drawn from the US Census Bureau. Weighted data estimates what the nationally representative population perceives. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

HOW RIWI WORKS

RIWI technology allows for the rapid capture and assessment of large samples of broad, truly randomized opinion and perceptions data on an ongoing basis. RIWI delivers anonymous opt-in surveys to web users who are surfing online, with access to the entire global internet population. When users stumble upon domains that RIWI owns or controls, these random, non-incented users are filtered through a series of proprietary algorithms to ensure there are no non-human respondents and invited to participate in a survey.

RIWI technology is able to target respondents automatically by geography and provide participants with a language- and context-appropriate survey. Survey participants are accessed on all web-enabled devices, and the technology cannot be blocked by state surveillance or internet control, nor is it susceptible to the increasing prevalence of ad-blocking technologies. Although RIWI collects and reports the age, gender, and geographic location of all respondents, no personally identifiable information is ever collected or reported.

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING AND RETAINING ONLINE PARTICIPANTS

RIWI's engagement and retention policy is built on years of experience, testing, and development of the optimal online survey experience, highly respectful of the time and other activities of the intercepted potential respondent. Surveys are designed to use clear and accessible language with responsive design formatting, ensuring a high-quality survey-taking experience on mobile devices, tablets, and desktop computers. Data quality is ensured by using tested questionnaire design methods to create the most intuitive survey for the random, non-incented respondent. No enticements are used, and participants can easily exit the survey at any time.

ANONYMITY AND SECURITY OF RESPONDENTS

RIWI has significant experience developing and launching anonymous digital polling to reach anonymous users globally. RIWI does not collect any personally identifiable information from respondents. All data captured, acquired, used, published, or disseminated by RIWI technology and systems, or data released by RIWI, are fully compliant with all applicable laws.

RIWI employs strategic security measures at all levels of the survey design, respondent experience, and data storage. Security measures are specific to the topic and region of deployment, as well as the recognized security risk, and can be adjusted as new information and geopolitical developments unfold. No response is traceable to an individual. All RIWI respondents are advised of their anonymity, security, and privacy when they randomly access an RIWI survey, allowing for the collection of otherwise sensitive and unsafe answers, or socially undesirable perceptions.

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STRATEGIC ADVISORS

Stewart Beck
President and CEO
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Dr. Jeffrey Reeves
Vice-President, Research
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

EDITORIAL REVIEW

Michael Roberts
Communications Manager
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

CREATIVE DESIGN

Jamie Curtis
Graphic Designer
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

RESEARCH PARTNERS

RIWI

LEAD RESEARCHERS

Dr. Jeffrey Reeves
Vice-President, Research
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Dr. Charles Labrecque
Research Manager
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Dr. Sreyoshi Dey
Program Manager, Perspectives Asia
(Surveys & Polling)

COMMUNICATIONS

Michael Roberts
Communications Manager
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

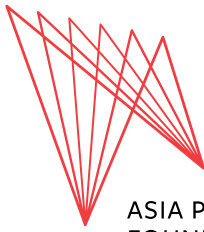
Karina Kwok
Social Media and Communications
Specialist
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Yiwei Jin
Junior Research Scholar
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Justin Kwan
Program Manager, APEC-Canada
Growing Business Partnership
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Isaac Lo
Post-graduate Research Scholar
Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

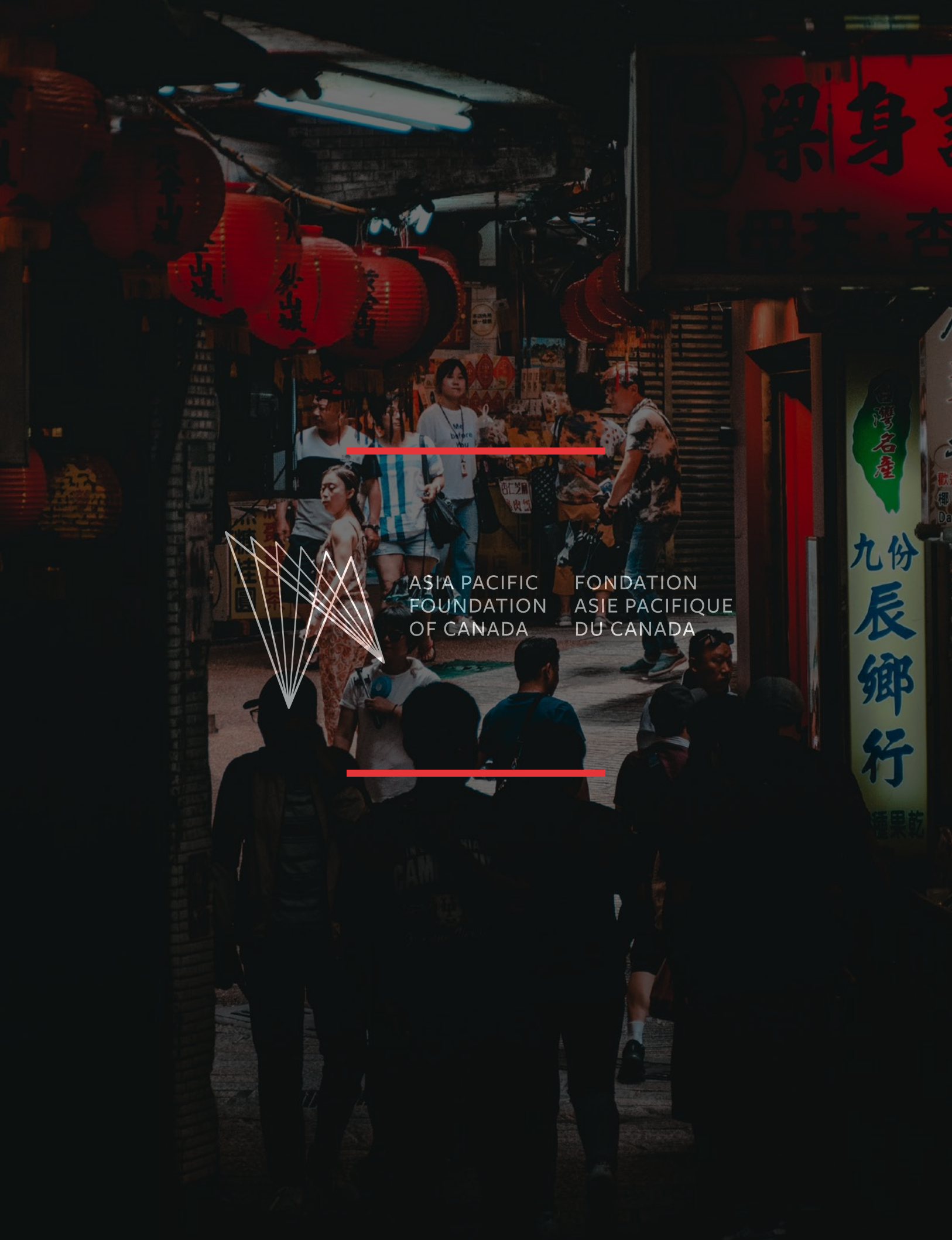


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Contact us at
info@asiapacific.ca

or visit us online at
www.asiapacific.ca



梁身

台灣名產
九份
長鄉行
糖果乾

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