



Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation

Special Report:

Taiwanese Preferences on Taiwan's Political Future

Released:

February 14, 2025

Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation (TPOF) released a special report on findings regarding Taiwanese public's preferences on Taiwan's political future. This report seeks to highlight and discuss critical elements of TPOF's December 2024 and January 2025 monthly national opinion polls.

How the Survey was Conducted

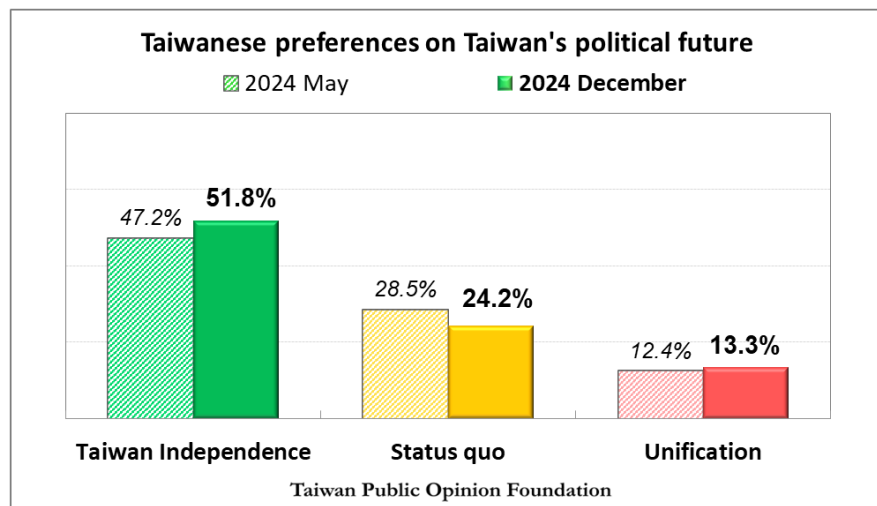
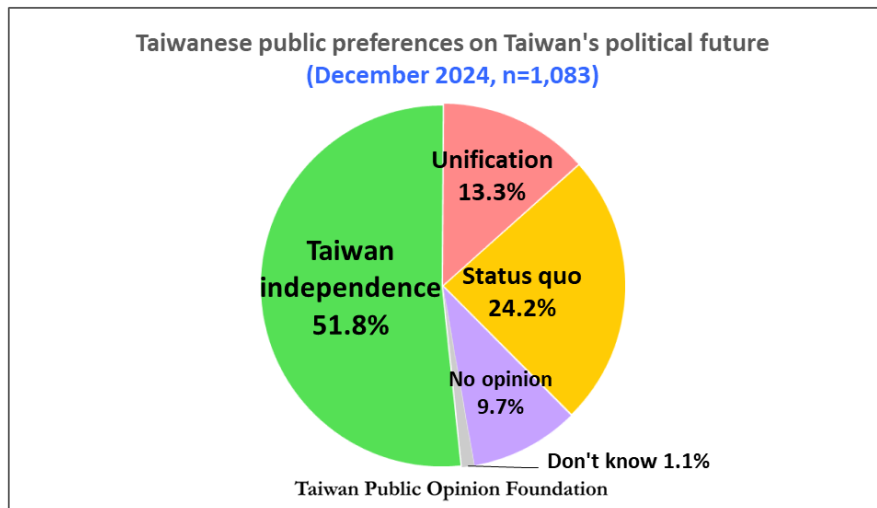
The surveys were conducted on December 9-11, 2024, and January 12-14, 2025. The December survey had a sample size of 1,083, with a sampling error of around ± 2.98 percentage points and 95% level of confidence. The January survey had a sample size of 1,081, with a sampling error of around ± 2.98 percentage points and 95% level of confidence. Adults 20 years of age and older residing in Taiwan were interviewed by telephone using live interviewers. Landline and cellphone numbers were drawn through dual-frame random sampling with a proportion of 70% from landlines and 30% from cellphones. Samples were demographically weighted to adjust for gender, age, education and the district of residency based on the latest statistics published by the Ministry of the Interior.

Findings:

Majority Taiwanese still prefer Taiwan independence

The poll asked: “There are debates regarding the future of Taiwan. Some people argue Taiwan should pursue unification with the other side of the [Taiwan] Strait, while others argue Taiwan should pursue its own independence. Do you support Taiwan independence, or unification with the other side?”

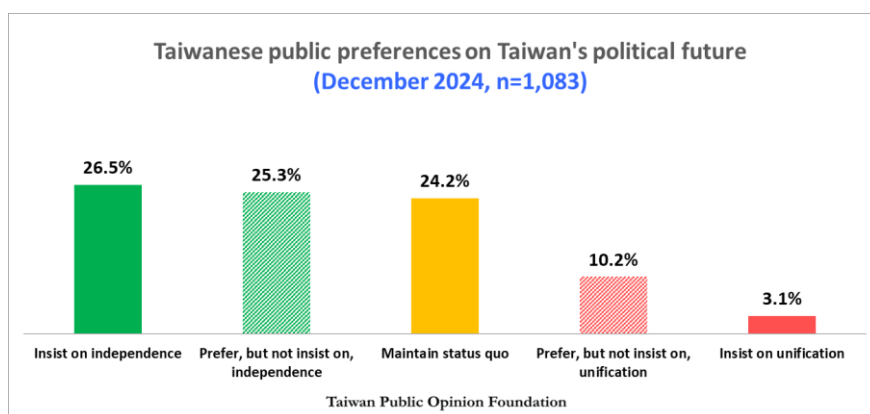
It was found that among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 51.8% prefer Taiwan independence, 24.2% prefer maintaining status quo, 13.3% prefer unification with China, while 10.8% said they do not know or have no opinion on the matter. In other words, the majority of Taiwanese people clearly prefer Taiwan independence as the most desirable political future, while maintaining status quo only constitutes the second most popular position, and those who prefer unification with China remain an extremely small minority.



Compared to the previous poll that was done in May 2024, support for independence increased by 4.6%, while support for status quo decreased by 4.3%, and support for unification with China increased by a slight 0.9%. What explains the small increase? Among the events that could have contributed to this was the new President Lai Ching-te's first, well-publicized [official overseas trip](#), the other was Taiwan's national baseball team [winning a world championship](#) in November 2024, both could have provided short term, small boost to support for independence.

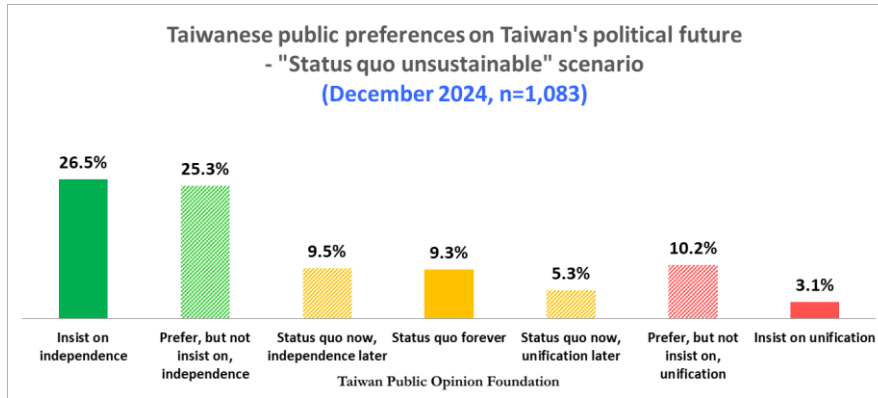
Taiwan's successive governments including both DPP and KMT camps have repeatedly asserted, contrary to decades of polling evidence, that Taiwanese majority prefer "maintaining status quo" indefinitely. This message, while politically convenient and expedient for whoever is in the ruling government position, is simply not rooted in facts and has greatly misled the international community.

When looking at a detailed breakdown of the responses, 26.5% support and insist on Taiwan independence, while 25.3% prefer independence but not insist on it. Among the supporters of unification, only a quarter of those insist on unification while the rest only prefer it. This means that at this moment, more than a quarter of Taiwanese strongly support independence, while only 3.1% strongly support unification with China.



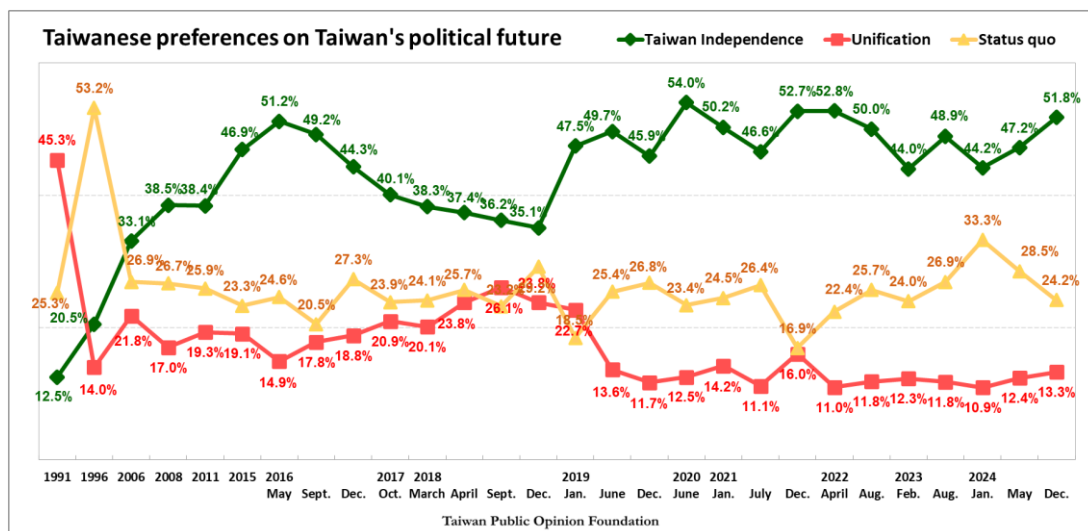
In addition to the simple unification vs. independence question, we also asked an additional question concerning a hypothetical scenario where status quo is unsustainable:

“If status quo is no longer possible to maintain, would you support Taiwan independence or unification?”



We found that 39.5% of those that originally said they support maintaining status quo changed to support independence, 21.9% changed to support unification, while 38.6% insisted on “keeping status quo forever” (the option was still made available). Based on this result, we can recalculate Taiwanese public opinion as 61.3% support eventual independence, 18.6% support eventual unification, and 9.3% support keeping status quo forever.

It is therefore clear that not only is Taiwan independence the majority preference among the Taiwanese public, it is also a preference more strongly held by its supporters compared to those supporting unification.



Looking at past polls, the Taiwanese public preferences on political future saw a noticeable change since Lai Ching-te became the new president in May 2024. Specifically:

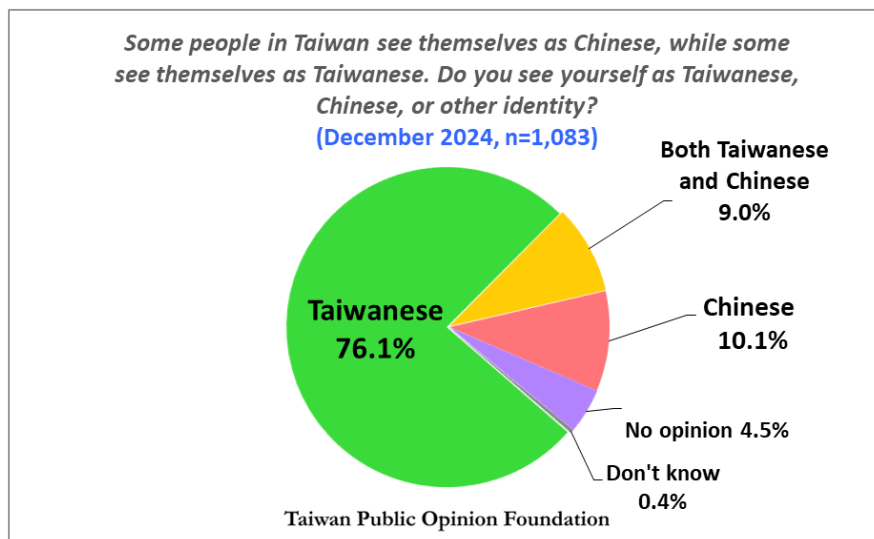
- In terms of political parties, supporters of ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) overwhelmingly (80%) support independence and only a tiny

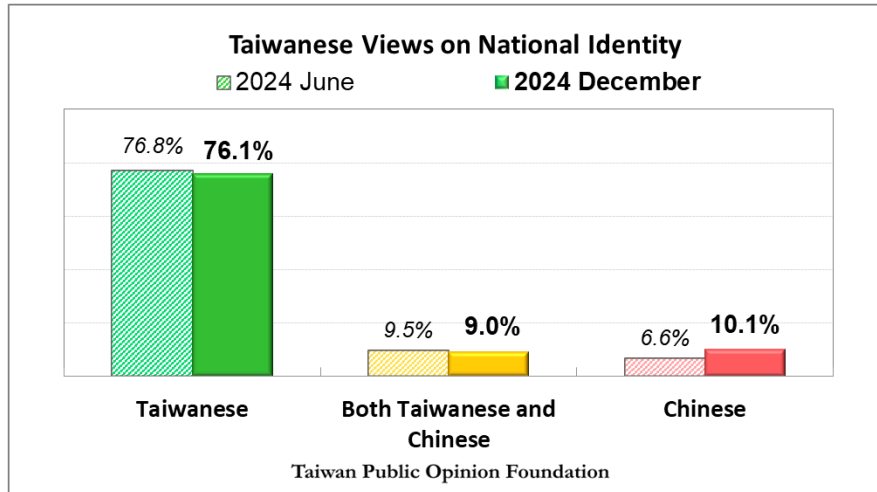
fraction (16%) support status quo. Among supporters of opposition Kuomintang (KMT), 37% support unification, 29% support status quo, 25% support independence. Among opposition Taiwan People's Party (TPP) supporters, 41% support independence, 30% support status quo, 21% support unification. Among independents, 41% support independence, 26% support status quo, 7.9% support unification.

- All groups of education attainment saw majority support independence. On the other hand, all age groups also saw majority support independence but with minor differences in composition. Among those age 20-24, 50% support independence, 22% status quo, 12% unification. Among age 25-34, 65% support independence, 22% status quo, 7.5% unification. Among age 35-44, 61% support independence, 16% status quo, 11% unification. Among age 45-54, 43% support independence, 33% status quo, 14% unification. Among age 55-64, 42% support independence, 33% status quo, 18% unification. Among age 65 and above, 52% support independence, 18% status quo, 15% unification.

Majority Taiwanese still identify as Taiwanese

Concerning Taiwanese national identity, the poll finds among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, 76.1% said they see themselves as Taiwanese, 10.1% as Chinese, 9% both Taiwanese and Chinese, and 4.9% said they don't know or have no opinion. As can be seen from our past polls, Taiwanese identity has been embraced by the vast majority of Taiwanese people for more than a decade and that percentage has not changed significantly over the years.

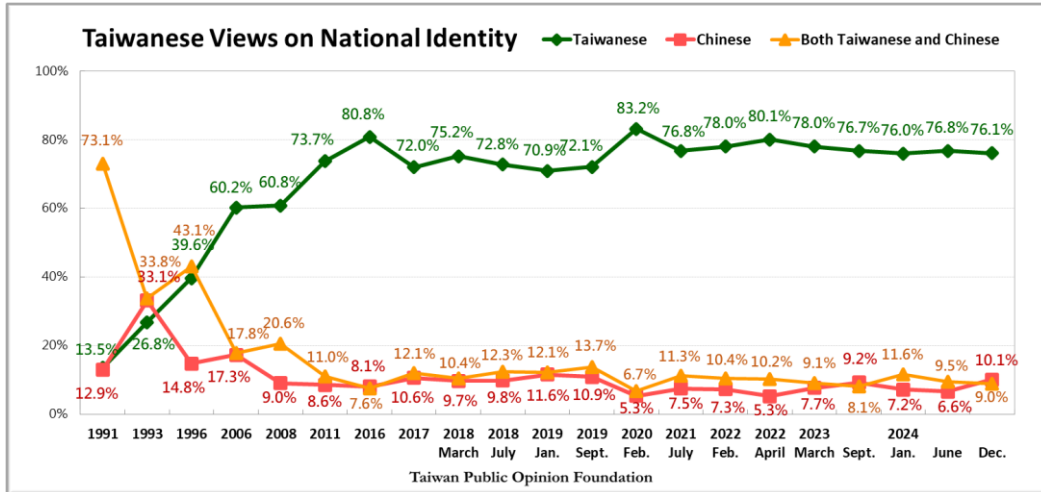




Compared to last poll conducted in June 2024, there has been minimal changes to the overall composition of national identity, although there has been a tiny increase in those identify as Chinese. Additionally:

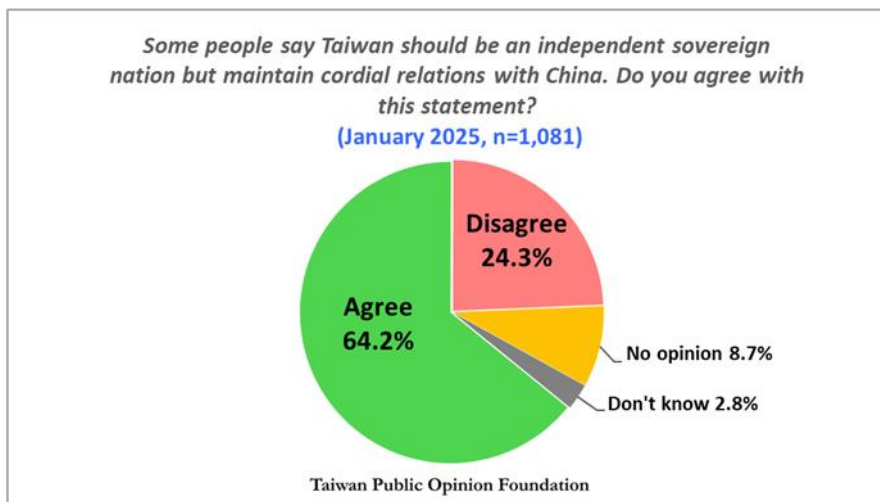
- All age groups saw an overwhelming majority identify as Taiwanese. Among age 20-24, 72.5% Taiwanese, 6.3% dual identity, 8.1% Chinese. Among age 25-34, 90.8% Taiwanese, 2.3% dual identity, 6.1% Chinese. Among age 35-44, 79.6% Taiwanese, 5.8% dual identity, 7.7% Chinese. Among age 45-54, 75.7% Taiwanese, 12.3% dual identity, 6.4% Chinese. Among age 55-64, 67% Taiwanese, 13.3% dual identity, 14.9% Chinese. Among age 65 and above, 72.1% Taiwanese, 10.3% dual identity, 14.4% Chinese.
- In terms of political parties, supporters of ruling DPP almost all (96.8%) identify as Taiwanese and only a tiny fraction have dual identity (1.9%) or identify as Chinese (0.9%). Among supporters of opposition KMT, 48.2% identify as Taiwanese, 20.6% dual identify, 26.7% Chinese. Among opposition TPP supporters, 75.2% identify as Taiwanese, 4.9% dual identify, 15.3% Chinese. Among independents, 70.7% identify as Taiwanese, 10.6% dual identify, 7.3% Chinese.

Overall, there is no question that Taiwanese identify still remains the dominant, overwhelming national identity among the Taiwanese population. This is even after eight presidential elections and ten legislative elections, of which three democratic transfers of power occurred. While partisan shifts can occur, Taiwanese national identity remains strong and is unlikely to change anytime soon.

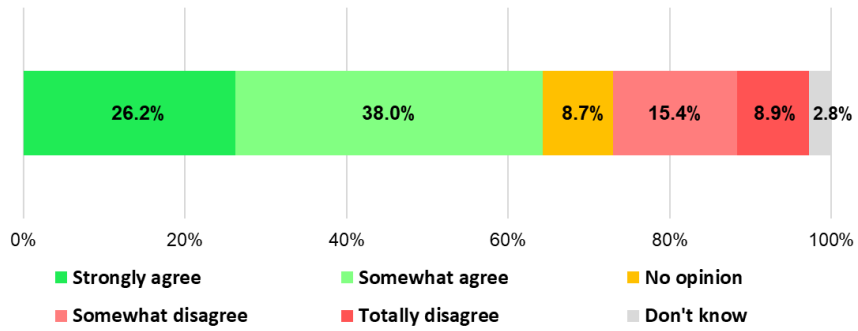


Majority Taiwanese desire independence but also cordial relations with China

The poll asked respondents whether they agree with the statement that “Taiwan should be an independent nation but maintain cordial relations with China.” Among Taiwanese adults aged 20 years and older, a majority of 64.2% agree with the statement, while a minority of 24.3% disagree. Notably, the level of majority agreement is observed and mostly similar across political partisan lines, meaning that most Taiwanese – regardless of party affiliations, do believe Taiwan should be an independent nation while keeping cordial relations with China. The majority agreement is also observed across different age groups, education attainments, and municipalities.



Some people say Taiwan should be an independent sovereign nation but maintain cordial relations with China. Do you agree with this statement?
(January 2025, n=1,081)



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