

# Strategizing the New Southbound Policy in President Lai's 'Shin-Lai' (Trustworthy) Diplomacy: Making Taiwan Indispensable and More Reliable

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*"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times....it was the season of Light,  
it was the season of Darkness....it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of  
despair..." from A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens.*

## **Abstract**

This article outlines the core rationale of President Lai Ching-te's foreign policy: a value-based or "Shin-Lai" (Trustworthy) diplomacy. It begins with a brief review of the key elements of the Trustworthy diplomacy and outlines its core values and future prospects. It then summarizes the four major characteristics of Lai's diplomacy — that is, value-based, prosperity-oriented, domestic-international-nexus as its blueprint, and implementing via innovative actions. It then looks at the implications and possible innovations of President Lai's continuation of former President Tsai Ing-wen's foreign policy by using Southeast Asia and South Asia as examples to explore the possible prospects of this Trustworthy diplomacy. This article then reviews Lai's rhetoric on the New Southbound Policy (NSP) over the past years. The main argument of this article contends that "strategizing" the NSP will solidify President Lai's Trustworthy diplomacy. It concludes with research findings and relevant policy recommendations.

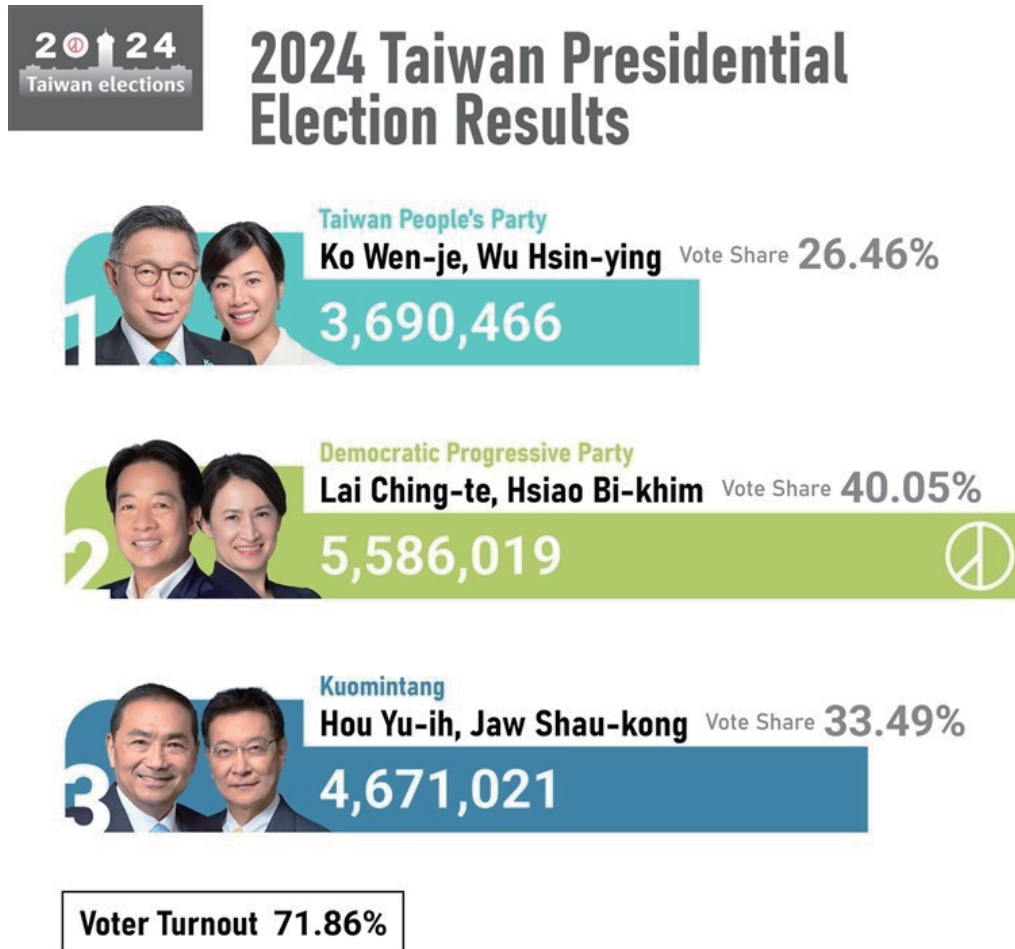
**Keywords:** Lai Ching-te, New Southbound Policy, New Southbound Policy Plus, Value-Based Diplomacy, Shin-Lai Diplomacy

## I. Introduction

2024 is a year of elections across the world. A total of 46 countries are scheduled to hold elections, with a total of 2 billion people casting votes to decide their new political landscapes. <sup>1</sup>This is a lively, super-cycle year for democracies, and it is also a year when democratic systems will be challenged and undermined by authoritarianism, subversion, and threats. <sup>2</sup>At the same time, as a beacon of democracy, Taiwan's presidential and legislative elections were completed on January 13. In those elections, Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidates Lai Ching-te and Hsiao Bi-khim were elected as the 16<sup>th</sup> president and vice president, with 5.58 million votes (40.05%).

Lai's victory meant that the DPP won the first-ever third straight presidential term by a party since the first direct presidential election in Taiwan in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> Lai came from a local background as an elected politician who has previously served as legislator (1999-2010), mayor of Tainan (2010-2017), premier (2017-2019), and vice president (2019-2024). Not only is he well-versed in politics, Lai was also the most proficient in Taiwan's foreign policy and international engagement of the three groups of candidates in the 2024 presidential election. For a long time, Lai has upheld the principles of democracy, peace, and prosperity as the core of his foreign policy, the abbreviation of which happens to correspond with the abbreviation of the Democratic Progressive Party and its value attached to Taiwan. Lai has long been concerned about Taiwan's international space and the survival of the state. More recently, in his inauguration speech on May 20, 2024, President Lai reiterated the significance of "democracy, peace, and prosperity (the DPP values)" as the future direction of Taiwan during his presidency. This study argues that the DPP values constitute the core

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1. International IDEA, "The 2024 Global Elections Super-Cycle," June 5, 2024, Accessed, *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance*, <<https://www.idea.int/initiatives/the-2024-global-elections-supercycle>>.
  2. Nicholas Vinocur, "Democracy is in peril in the world's bonanza year of elections," *Politico*, January 1, 2024, <<https://www.politico.eu/article/democracy-2023-elections-united-states-europe-united-kingdom-russia-taiwan-donald-trump/>>.
  3. "Lai leads DPP to historic third term," *Taipei Times*, January, 14, 2024, <<https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2024/01/14/2003812068>>.



**Figure 1. The Results of the 2024 Presidential Election in Taiwan**

Source: Chang Hsin-yu & Matthew Mazzetta, "Election 2024: Taiwan's 'boring' election a sign of its maturity as a democracy: Scholar," *Focus Taiwan: CNA English News*, January 14, 2024, <<https://focustaiwan.tw/politics/202401140009>>.

elements of President Lai's foreign policy — the so-called "value-based" or *Shin-Lai* ("Trustworthy") diplomacy that he frequently articulated during his campaign.

This study argues Lai's "Trustworthy diplomacy" builds upon and is a continuation of former president Tsai Ing-wen's Steadfast Diplomacy.<sup>4</sup> It is aimed at

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4. Peng-Hsuan Chen, "From Tsai to Lai: The Past, Present, and Future of Taiwan's Foreign Policy," May 17, 2024, *The Diplomat*, <<https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/from-tsai-to-lai-the-past-present-and-future-of-taiwans-foreign-policy/>>.

gaining trust at home and abroad, and to move forward and reinvigorate its own path in the near future.

This paper outlines President Lai's foreign policy while addressing its prospects and practical approaches. It is divided into five parts. Following a brief introduction, the second part examines the key elements of the Trustworthy diplomacy to outline its core values and future prospects. The third part further summarizes the four major characteristics of Lai's diplomacy — that is, value-based, prosperity-oriented, domestic-international-nexus as its blueprint, and implemented via innovative actions. The fourth part analyzes the implications and possible innovations of President Lai's continuation of former president Tsai's foreign policy; in particular, this article uses Southeast Asia and South Asia as examples to explore the prospects for Trustworthy diplomacy. This part reviews Lai's attitude toward the New Southbound Policy (NSP) over the past years, and argues that "strategizing" the NSP will further solidify President Lai's Trustworthy diplomacy. Finally, the fifth part concludes with research findings and relevant policy recommendations.

## II. Interpreting President Lai's Foreign Policy

Some people in Taiwan believe that President Lai intends to promote a value-based diplomacy, but this study argues that a more inclusive term should be *Shin-Lai* ("Trustworthy") diplomacy, which has been articulated formally by the new foreign minister, Lin chia-lung:

"During the past eight years, the Steadfast Diplomacy has laid a solid foundation for Taiwan, while the Trustworthy Diplomacy would enable Taiwan to gain more international support as Taiwan has become a reliable partner to international community." <sup>5</sup>

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5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Foreign Policy Briefing to Legislative Yuan by Minister Lin," May 30, 2024, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* (R.O.C.), <<https://ws.mofa.gov.tw/Download.ashx?u=LzAwMS9VcGxvYWQvNDAyL3JlbGZpbGUvODIvMTE3NDgxLzMwYjQ5ZjE5LTlZOTQtNDZlNDg4LTAxNzY2NDcyMmQ4YS5wZGY%3D&n=5p6X6YOo6ZW356uL5rOV6Zmi56ys5Y2B5LiA5bGG56ys5LiA5pyD5pyf5aSW5Lqk5qWt5YuZ5aCx5ZGKKDIwMjQtMDUtMzApLnBkZg%3D%3D>>.



Accordingly, this study argues that "Trustworthy" diplomacy will emphasize the joint efforts of Taiwan's trustworthy president and his administration, in partnership with trustworthy Taiwanese enterprises and civil society, to empower a more reliable Taiwan within the international system. In order to enable a presidency trusted by its people and enjoy international support, it is imperative for President Lai to prioritize the existing trust at home and abroad. Therefore, Lai repeatedly emphasized during his presidential campaign that he would carry the torch of former president Tsai and build upon her achievements in foreign policy after taking office.

Indeed, continuing Tsai's diplomacy is important mainly for two reasons: First, President Tsai's Steadfast diplomacy has strengthened Taiwan's relations with like-minded countries over the past eight years, and underscored the value of Taiwan to the international community as a reliable and resilient partner. President Tsai's NSP, in particular, successfully navigated through the crises of geopolitics and the COVID-19 pandemic while conjugating with the contending Indo-Pacific strategies among major powers in the Indo-Pacific region. The NSP lasted to the last day of Tsai's presidency, while South Korea's New Southern Policy, in contrast, appears to have gone dormant.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, President Lai has expressed his commitment to continuing the New Southbound Policy. This article argues that besides continuing Tsai's legacy, President Lai will seek to reinvigorate and strategize the NSP with innovative elements.

## 1. Value-based

When he was mayor of Tainan, Lai revealed his belief in enabling Taiwan's foreign policy by using the Democratic Progressive Party's acronym — DPP — to highlight Taiwan's strength in terms of "democracy, peace, and prosperity (also DPP). Although he used this to highlight the direction of his city diplomacy at the time, the trinity of democracy, peace, and prosperity — a mutually supportive and reinforced structure — is even more important today when the world is undergoing drastic changes due to geopolitical tensions, a supply chain crisis and authoritarian

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6. Alan H. Yang & H. H. Michael Hsiao, "Navigating the Politics of Soft Power: Taiwan and Korea's Regional Approach in Comparison," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 54, No. 2, June 2023, pp. 342-353.

expansionism. President Lai reiterated these DPP values in his inauguration speech, saying that this core value is not only advancing Taiwan's future direction, but also strengthening the connection between Taiwan and the world.<sup>7</sup> Democracy, of course, refers to Taiwan's democratic system and values of freedom, peace, and international stability and Taiwan's security, while prosperity highlights the importance of inclusive growth and welfare of the people. These three values all help promote and strategize Taiwan's future in a more rules-based international order. Moreover, in order to implement the DPP values, this value-based diplomacy also corresponds with President Lai's conception of "diplomacy is an extension of domestic policy" (外交是內政的延伸) and "the country of extensive economic strength over which the sun never sets" (經濟日不落國) which Lai advocated during his presidential campaign. During a DPP diplomatic reception in October 2023, Lai reaffirmed his firm commitment to democracy, peace, and prosperity, and to creating a new era of value-based diplomacy.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Prosperity-oriented

Looking back on the proposals he made during his presidential campaign, Lai's rhetoric mainly focused on the economy and innovation, with an emphasis on the promotion of the six core strategic industries (六大核心戰略產業) — information and digital industries, cybersecurity industry, precision health industry, green and renewable energy industry, national defense and strategic industries, and strategic stockpile industries.<sup>9</sup> and the development of the five trusted industries (五大信賴產業) — semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), military, security and surveillance,

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7. Office of the President, 2024, "Inaugural Address of ROC 16th-term President Lai Ching-te," May 20, 2024, *Office of the President Republic of China (Taiwan)*, <<https://english.president.gov.tw/NEWS/6726>>.

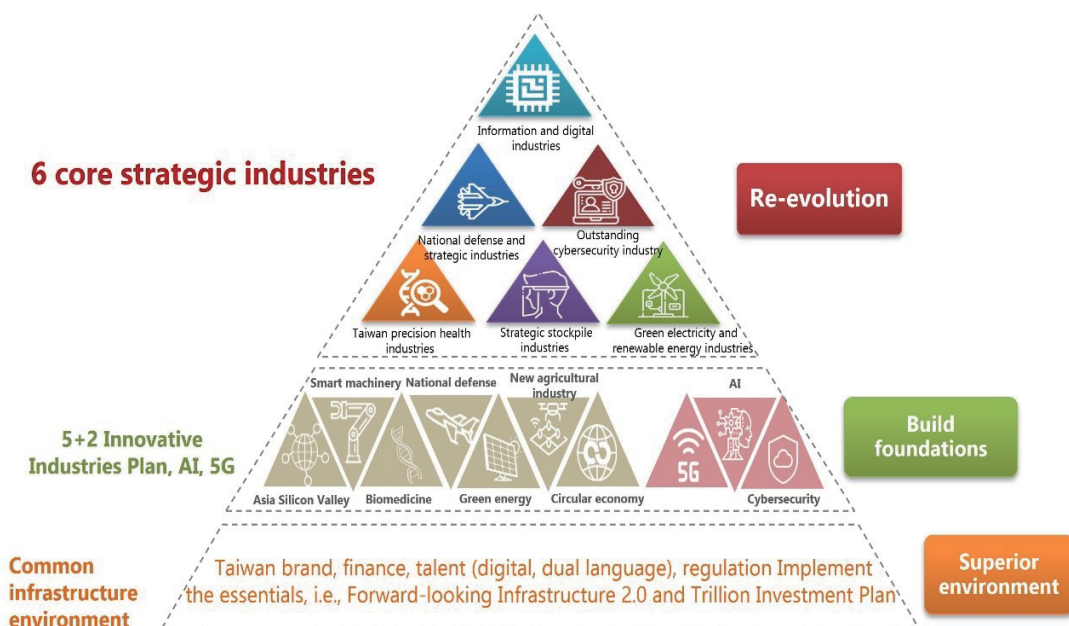
8. Democratic Progressive Party, "Lai Lays Out Foreign-Policy Vision: Connecting With the World Through Values-Based Diplomacy," October 29, 2023, *DPP*, <[https://www.dpp.org.tw/en/content\\_print/media/92](https://www.dpp.org.tw/en/content_print/media/92)>.

9. National Development Council, "Program for Promoting Six Core Strategic Industries," June 5, 2024, Accessed, *National Development Council*, <[https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content\\_List.aspx?n=2D827BFE7E3598BE](https://www.ndc.gov.tw/en/Content_List.aspx?n=2D827BFE7E3598BE)>.

and next-generation communications. These helped Taiwan overcome the pandemic, the U.S.-China trade war, and the supply-chain crisis. The aforementioned strategic concept reflects President Lai's view of industry as a niche that highlights Taiwan's importance, and is linked to Taiwan's response to geopolitical changes. This attitude and the measures taken connect Taiwan's resilience with international demand for Taiwan and the pursuit of prosperity, thereby strengthening Taiwan's survival.

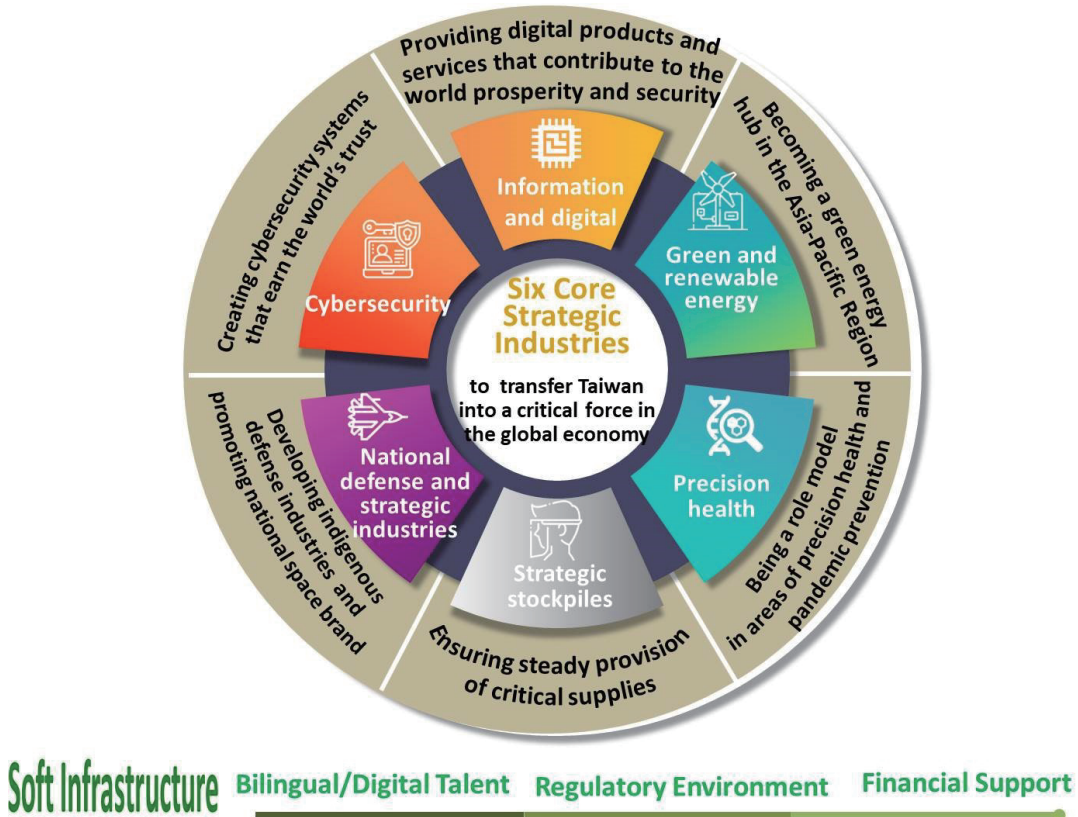
### 3. Economic and Trade Practices that Keep the Country from Falling Behind

The aim is to connect Taiwan with the world, and to build Taiwan into a country that is highly competitive in the global economy. With such a forward-looking vision, President Lai has proposed three concrete directions: first, "look forward to the future, and be smart [in terms of] sustainability," including firmly implementing the 2050 net-zero goal of a green transformation of Taiwan, while making every effort to promote Taiwan as an "AI Island." The second direction is to "increase the competence for space and maritime exploration." President Lai has vowed to make



**Figure 2. The Six Core Strategic Industries, the Advanced Deployment and the 5+2 Industries**

Source: National Development Council, "Program for Promoting Six Core Strategic Industries."



**Figure 3. Turning Taiwan into a Critical Force in the Global Economy**

Source: National Development Council, "Program for Promoting Six Core Strategic Industries."

Taiwan the Asian center for a democratic supply chain of unmanned vehicles, the development of mid- and low-orbit satellites for the next generation of communication systems, and advances in the global space industry. Last but not least is "strengthening Taiwan's global layout while marketing around the world," with a specific focus on strengthening Taiwan's participation in regional economic integration.

The priority measures to implement Lai's vision of making Taiwan "a country of extensive economic strength over which the sun never sets" is in fact consistent with the implementation of the NSP advocated by former president Tsai between 2016 and 2024. Over the past eight years, the NSP has received international recognition and support, successfully reducing Taiwan's economic reliance on China's market, and constructively developing multi-faceted partnerships with 16 neighboring countries,

including 10 ASEAN countries, six other Asian countries, as well as New Zealand and Australia, on a wide range of issue-areas such as education, agriculture, medical and healthcare, social connectivity, resilience, disaster preparedness,<sup>10</sup> and supply-chain reorientation. The NSP has implemented five government-led flagship programs shouldered by key ministries, facilitating new high-tech supply chains led by Taiwan and co-established by industries and stakeholders in relevant NAP partner countries, enabling joint efforts in cultivation of future talents needed for the national and regional development of Asia, promoting regional agriculture capacity to jointly safeguard food security and upgrade the high-quality of plantations (including three



**Figure 4. New Southbound Policy**

Source: Executive Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan), "New Southbound Policy," July 4, 2019, *Executive Yuan, Republic of China (Taiwan)*, <<https://english.ey.gov.tw/News3/9E5540D592A5FECD/2ec7ef98-ec74-47af-85f2-9624486adf49>>.

10. Alan H. Yang, "Taiwan's New Southbound Policy and Disaster Preparedness Cooperation: The Cross-Sectoral Partnership in Practice," *International Journal of China Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, December 2023, pp. 35-54.



comprehensive agricultural zones) in NSP partner countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, and the One country-Multiple Center (OCMC) program of healthcare NSP flagship programs in different localities. Besides these government-led efforts, the private sector as well as civil society in Taiwan were also driving forces that helped the consolidate partnership between Taiwan and its NSP partners. Overall, this constitutes the cross-sectoral partnership, the public sector-private sector-people sector partnership (P-P-P-P) synergy that helped materialize the NSP.<sup>11</sup>

The early promotion of the NSP was started as early as when Lai served as premier, including the New Southbound Policy Guideline, work plans, and flagship programs implemented by various ministries. During his time as vice president, Lai



**Figure 5. Then-Vice President Lai Addresses the 2020 Yushan Forum**

Source: Credit by Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF).

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11. Alan H. Yang, "Strategising Taiwan's New Southbound Policy: The Practice of PPPP Configuration," *East Asian Policy*, Vol. 14, No. 2, April 2022, pp. 75-92.

continued to participate in the annual Yushan Forum and delivered his views for the NSP and Taiwan's foreign policy. For example, in 2020, Vice President Lai said that Taiwan has developed in three areas: public health, science and technology, and democracy, and hoped that these developments can make more contributions to Asia. Even during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, Lai also attended the forum and called on Asian countries to unite and cooperate to address the emergency caused by the pandemic, and jointly establish a safer and freer economic and trade system for post-pandemic recovery. He also underscored the need to uphold democratic values and safeguard peace in Asia. In 2022, Lai emphasized that he would uphold the spirit of "Taiwan can help Asia, and Asia can help Taiwan," in promoting the NSP, and proactively promote the positive loop between Taiwan and NSP partner countries. In 2023, Lai said the NSP has strengthened cooperation between Taiwan and partner countries and created a virtuous circle. This means that Taiwan and the Indo-Pacific countries are vital partners, not only in terms of economy and trade, but also in creating common prosperity and safeguarding regional stability.



**Figure 6. Then-Vice President Lai Addresses the 2021 Yushan Forum**

Source: Credit by Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF).





**Figure 7. Then-Vice President Lai Addresses the 2022 Yushan Forum**

Source: Credit by Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF).



**Figure 8. Then-Vice President Lai Addresses the 2023 Yushan Forum**

Source: Credit by Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF).

### **III. The NSP's Achievements and Next Steps**

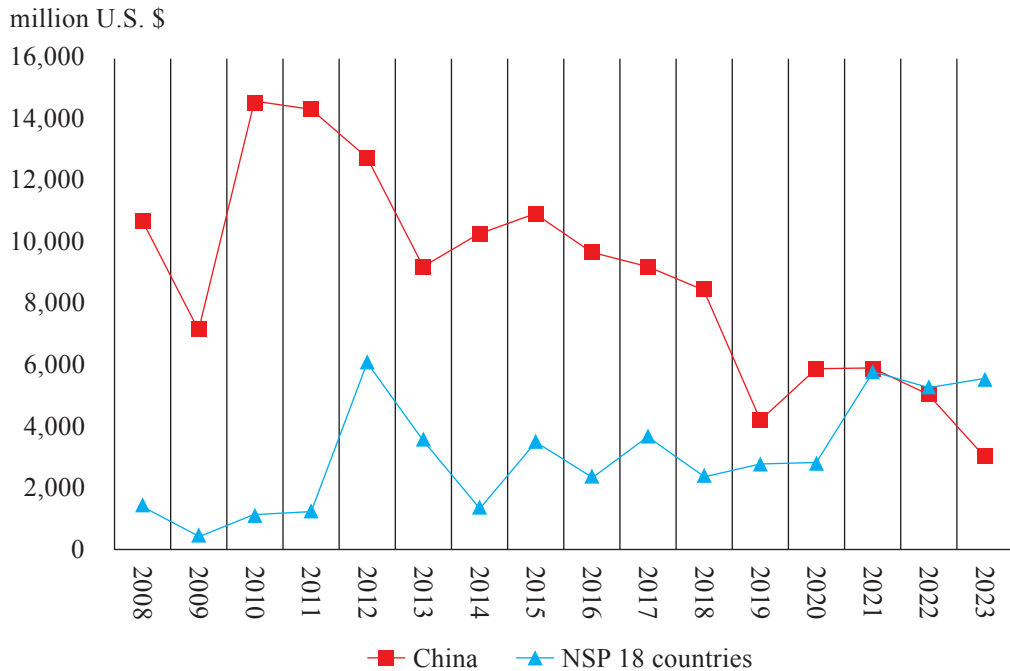
Since former president Tsai's launch of the New Southbound Policy in 2016, Taiwan has significantly bridged the gap with its neighboring countries. The NSP has also evolved from reducing sole reliance on the Chinese market to becoming a robust regional strategy aimed at constructing a resilient Taiwan and fostering regional connectivity. As Tsai stated in 2018, the NSP is Taiwan's regional strategy for Asia, and in 2022, she underscored that the NSP is at the center of Taiwan's Indo-Pacific strategy. Implemented through the aforementioned PPPP model, the policy has clearly defined Taiwan's position, enhancing its participation in the regional community through diverse pathways.

#### **1. Prudent Risk Diversification**

In retrospect, without the NSP, Taiwan's continued over-reliance on the Chinese market would have remained lopsided. Moreover, Taiwan would have been adversely affected by the U.S.–China trade war and the ensuing crises triggered by geopolitics, potentially making misguided choices in the restructuring of the global supply chain. Additionally, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing socioeconomic crisis would likely have left Taiwan exceptionally vulnerable due to its exposure to high risks.

#### **2. Achievements of the Government-led Flagship Programs**

Since 2017, the government has implemented five flagship programs, coordinated by the Office of Trade Negotiations (OTN), led by John Deng Chen-chung, Minister without Portfolio of the Executive Yuan. These programs focus on leveraging Taiwan's strengths and sharing resources and experiences to build resilient regional connectivity. As mentioned earlier, the flagship programs encompass sectors related to the NSP, such as trade and investment, agriculture, public health and medical care, as well as education, talent development, and social connectivity. Moreover, the mobilization of all ministries and sectors in the government has been a major force behind the strengthening and reinforcing of the NSP.



**Figure 9. Trends in Taiwan's Investment in China and NSP 18 Countries (2008-2023)**

Source: 李明勳, 〈我國「新南向政策」經貿工作成果與未來調整做法芻議〉, 《經濟前瞻》, Vol. 213, May 2024, p. 39.

Specifically, with such efforts over the years, the NSP's achievement in trade and investment is noteworthy. For example, bilateral trade between Taiwan and the NSP partner countries grew by 88.2% between 2016 and 2022. Moreover, Taiwan's investment towards NSP partnering countries surpassed investment towards China in 2022. More importantly, the NSP has been instrumental in assisting Taiwanese businesses in earning profits from related endeavors.

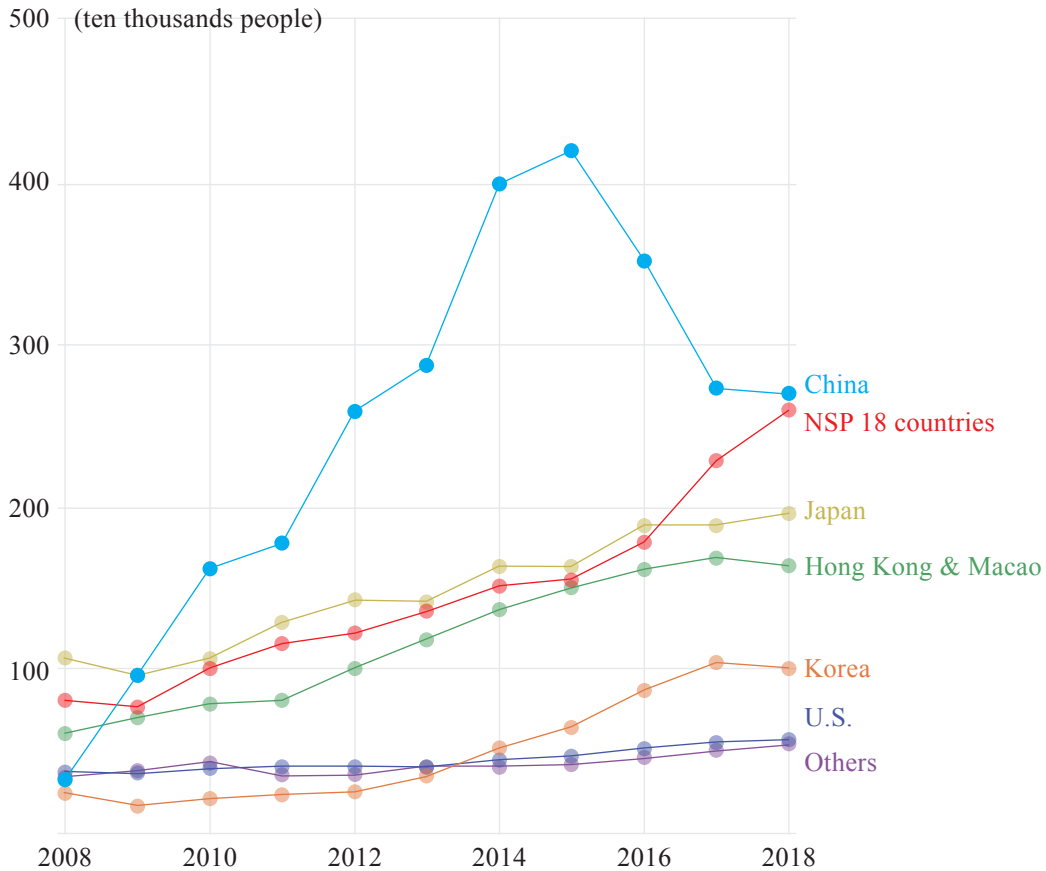
Sustaining Taiwan's Southbound Focus in the Indo-Pacific is critically important to the Lai administration as it navigates the crisis caused by supply-chain disruptions and great-power rivalry. Government-led initiatives have also fostered institutional cooperation within regional networks, as evidenced in the pursuit of agreements and MoUs in areas such as double-taxation avoidance, investment protection, educational collaboration, industrial and professional talent training. Other flagship programs have

had fruitful achievements. In the field of healthcare, Taiwan has trained 1,634 medical professionals from the NSP region with collaboration between 10 medical centers from seven NSP partner countries since 2018. Moreover, Taiwan's NRICM101 herbal medicine also served as a vital resource during the pandemic. Between 2017 and 2019, visitors to Taiwan for medical purposes grew by nearly 40%, including numerous visitors with rare diseases. In the agricultural sector, the NSP facilitated in establishment of agricultural demonstration zones in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Taiwan's agricultural exports to the region, meanwhile, have increased by over 20%. Additionally, Taiwan enhanced the production efficiency of its partner countries by providing quality technological assistance and training for young farmers. Lastly, the number of students from NSP partner countries studying in Taiwan also increased by 104.49% between 2016 and 2022, reflecting successful collaboration in talent and international education.

### **3. Successful Promotion by Taiwan's Civil Society**

NGO and civil society participation in the NSP has also been robust, encompassing contributions from both the private sector and civil society organizations. Taiwanese industries, including high-tech manufacturing, IoT, steel production, information and AI, wastewater and emissions treatment and banking, have expanded their international operations to solidify Taiwan's footprint. Surveys conducted by the Taiwan-Asia Exchange Foundation (TAEF) in Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia have reported positive views of Taiwan and Taiwanese businesses among local respondents, with Taiwan among the top 10–15 foreign investors, while NSP partner countries have also largely maintained positive views on Taiwan and Taiwanese businesses. Promoting exchanges between the citizens of those countries is a core feature in implementing the people-centered NSP. For example, before the COVID-19 pandemic, visitors from NSP partner countries increased by 55.3% between 2016–2019. In the first half of 2023, more than 1.09 million people from these partner countries visited Taiwan, accounting for over 40.86% of all visitors to Taiwan and becoming Taiwan's largest tourist source market.

Strengthening connectivity between private sectors is also paramount to the NSP, with leading think tanks and vibrant NGOs key in its endeavor. For example, TAEF



**Figure 10. Changes in the Number of Tourists Arriving in Taiwan**

Source: 王承中, 〈去年東南亞旅客來台 人數及占比雙創新高〉, *CNA*, April 17, 2019, <<https://imgcdn.cna.com.tw/www/WebPhotos/1024/20190417/773862435568.jpg>>.

has expanded the Yushan Forum into a crucial platform for international dialogue across the Indo-Pacific region. In addition, TAEF has advanced five core action programs by focusing on youth leadership, think tank and policy cooperation, civil-society connectivity, regional resilience, and art and cultural exchanges, thereby supporting and strengthening social connectivity. Over the past years, TAEF has promoted an array of activities, conferences, forums, youth camps, and art seasons and exhibitions. Additionally, TAEF has published policy reports on Taiwan's NSP, Taiwan–India relations, Taiwan–Australia relations, Taiwan–Southeast Asia relations, Taiwan's connections with the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy, and the role of Taiwanese



NGOs in providing international assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. These publications have showcased the influence and social impact of TAEF as a “think and do tank” dedicated to the NSP.

Such cross-sectoral collaborative partnerships ensured that the NSP achieved its objectives rather than being merely a policy slogan. The next step of the NSP during the Lai presidency will be to aim for a unified strategic direction for Taiwan's future with the commitment of implementing the NSP with innovative inputs, to enhance Taiwan's regional relationships, and foster its soft and warm power diplomacy.

#### **IV. Conclusion: Suggesting a Plus Modality of the NSP**

Lai has always had high expectations for the NSP. In addition to continuing to build a blueprint for the common prosperity of Taiwan and the Indo-Pacific countries, he will also uphold the “people-centered” rationale and actively pursue his vision of the Trustworthy diplomacy envisaged during the campaign. This study suggests that on the basis of the existing NSP, President Lai's New Southbound Policy can become an enhanced version of the original model — a New Southbound Policy Plus (NSPP or NSP+). This enhanced version can deepen and strengthen the existing architecture and create new mechanisms through cross-sectoral synergy and joint efforts made by third parties or relevant stakeholders so that the NSP can become a strategic interface for enabling good governance and regional resilience initiated by Taiwan and embraced by major powers in the Indo-Pacific region.

In this regard, this study suggests that the further corridorization of the NSP can be prioritized and strategized by the Lai administration through the construction of six NSP corridors, including three government-led NSP corridors for digital technology and semiconductors, health and medical care, and resilience and disaster preparedness, while another three NSP corridors can be led by think tanks, NGOs and other non-government stakeholders, such as TAEF. Apart from these six NSP corridors, ongoing efforts by various ministries should aim to deepen and consolidate the NSP corridors through a synergic configuration.

Such corridorization efforts have at least three areas of strategic importance:

First, to show commitment to NSP partner countries by demonstrating that the policy has achieved remarkable results in the past, and that the new administration will continue and strategize its impact.

Second, to demonstrate to the international community that Taiwan can not only help, but that Taiwan can and is also willing to lead. Through the NSPP, Taiwan's relevance can be underscored in line with President Lai's Trustworthy diplomacy by highlighting and materializing the vision of "making Taiwan a country with economic strength over which the sun never sets." More importantly, cooperation with third parties must also be strengthened.

Third, in line with President Lai's views on democracy, is the DPP's trust-based diplomacy for prosperity, peace, and industrial links.

The international community's focus on Taiwan should not be limited to the negative and passive aspects of a "Taiwan crisis." Instead, the positive outcomes of the NSP have gradually accumulated, demonstrating more active and constructive implications of Taiwan's relevance. The NSP's proactive commitment to advancing a people-centered development agenda and promoting regional prosperity has increasingly highlighted Taiwan's significance and indispensability to the NSP region and its partner countries. The NSP has thus become an essential and integral part of President Lai's diplomacy.