



## 台灣新經濟簡訊

經建會法協中心

### 新聞快遞

#### 產業進用外勞比率鬆綁

為回應企業產業發展需求，解決國內產業面臨勞動力不足問題，以進一步帶動投資，行政院決定大幅鬆綁現有產業僱用外勞比率的法令限制；除鬆綁 9 個產業外勞比率，也開放增繳外勞的就業安定費後，可提高聘僱外勞的比率，最高增額比例 15%，並針對回流台商、新增投資案訂定優惠措施，以帶動企業擴大在台投資。

現行國內企業聘僱外勞的法令，是將國人較不願從事的「辛苦、骯髒、危險（取自日文 Kitsui、Kitanai、Kiken）」的 3K 行業，分為 10%、15%、20%、25%、35% 等 5 級制核配外勞，也就是所謂的「3K5 級制」。之前，只有在自由貿易港區，外勞聘僱上限可達 40%。

為因應國內經營環境的改變，勞委會決定鬆綁 9 個產業外勞比率，其中塑膠安全帽製造業、清潔用品製造業與化妝品製造業聘僱外勞比率分別為 20%、15%、15%。另外，成衣及其服飾品製造業、行李箱及手提袋製造業和冷凍冷藏肉類製造業，外勞比率從 20% 放寬至 25%；印刷電路板製造業和半導體封裝業及測試業，比率也從 10% 放寬至 15%；自行車零組件製造業的外勞比率從 15% 放寬至 20%。

勞委會表示，除了鬆綁上述 9 個產業的外勞聘僱比率外，一般產業若有增聘外勞需求，在最高增額比率 15% 的範圍內，只要增繳每名外勞的就業安定費，即可增聘外勞。也就是說，現有 3K5 級制下，一名外勞的就業安定費約新台幣 2,000 元，企業若要增加 1 ~ 5%、6 ~ 10%、11 ~ 15% 的外勞，每名增聘的外勞分別再增繳 3,000 元、5,000 元、7,000 元的就業安定費，即可增加聘僱外勞。

此外，行政院針對台商回台投資及新增投資案，也給予更優惠的外勞聘僱額度。在台商回台投資方面，赴大陸投資達 2 年，並取得經濟部核准函，只要符合相關條件就可以在核配額度外增聘 15% 或 20% 的外勞。如台資跨國公司在台設有研發中心或營運總部，可增聘外勞數額為 15%，台商若具「自有品牌、國際行銷出貨占產量 50% 以上」、「國際供應鏈重要環節前五大供應商或經審核居供應鏈關鍵地位」，或「屬高附加價值產品及關鍵零組件相關產業」，附加外勞數額則可達 20%，最高總額上限為 40%。

行政院補充說明，上述台商的投資金額門檻，高科技產業為 5 億元以上，非高科技產業 1 億元以上，就業門檻為 1 年內創造本勞就業人數 100 人。此外，符合上述條件的台商回台投資，除了外勞聘僱比率提高外，同時享有 5 年豁免增繳就業安定費的獎勵。

符合 3K5 級制的國內新增投資案，也將可增聘 5% 的外勞，而傳統產業投資金額達 1 億元以上或高科技產業達 5 億元以上者，則可增聘 10% 的外勞，外勞聘僱總額最高 40%，且享有 3 年不需增繳就業安定費的豁免期，3 年期滿後則回歸現有法令措施。

行政院預估，包括國內新增投資案與台商回台投資案件，合計可增加 8 萬名外勞名額，國內勞工估計也可增加 12 萬個就業機會。勞委會表示，關於各項增額進用外勞比率的方案與措施，目前正在修訂外國人從事《就業服務法》第 46 條第 1 項相關規定，修訂完成後將對外公告實施，各項鬆綁外勞比率的方案預計在今年底正式上路，在 2014 年 12 月 31 日前完成申請者，就可以享有優惠措施。

## 典範科大培育產學人才

為解決產學落差，促使國內人才培育符合業界需求，教育部研擬 4 年期「發展典範科技大學計畫」，預計在全台挑選 8 至 12 所科技大學，引導科技大學建構產業創新研發環境，並針對國內產業需求，培養訂單式人才。教育部已於今年 3 月試辦推動典範科技大學，共有國立台北科技大學、國立雲林科技大學、南台科技大學、國立台灣科技大學、國立屏東科技大學、國立高雄應用科技大學等 6 所科技大學獲選加入計畫；另有正修科技大學、龍華科技大學等 2 所科技大學獲補助成立產學研發中心。

其中，台北科技大學效法瑞士學徒制，推動產業學院人培計畫，與港商瑞健集團簽訂「學徒計畫」，協助學生實習與就業接軌；台灣科技大學則與華碩公司共同成立「體感創新應用實驗室」，搶攻體感產業 118 億美元商機；南台科技大學研發「多媒體互動娛樂設施」技術，培育互動多媒體人才，並與知名電影公司簽洽特效製作產學合作與技轉；而屏東科技大學則推動學生赴海外國際產業實習，目前簽約提供海外實習機構達近百家，另建置跨領域整合型產學平台，其中獸醫系藉由平台已達成提升禽用疫苗產值約 2.9 億元。

為延伸並擴大計畫推動成效，2013 年起，教育部將爭取政府公共建設及科技計畫經費挹注，希望未來 4 年內，協助 8 至 12 所科技大學，整合區域內教學、智財及產業資源，發展成為典範科技大學。

教育部表示，這項計畫除協助學校強化企業實習課程、或與企業合作開辦產業學院、人才培育專班外，也將強化連結學校產學實務，以增建或整建多功能實習工廠、研發成果試量產測試中心、產品設計中心、產學營運中心、創新育成中心、特定生產線模擬設施等建築，以與產業無縫接軌。

## 國人赴美免簽

自 2012 年 11 月 1 日起，凡是持有中華民國新版晶片護照，在台澎金馬設有戶籍、有國民身分證統一編號的民衆，赴美國從事 90 天以下的商務或觀光旅行活動，只要事先上網取得「旅行授權電子系統 (ESTA)」授權許可，即可享有免簽證的待遇。

美國國土安全部在 10 月初宣布，台灣成為美國免簽證計畫 (VWP) 參與國之一，成為全球第 37 個美國免簽證的國家。外交部發言人夏季昌表示，美國同意國人赴美免簽最大的意義，是對國人守法守紀的信任與肯定。

以往國人赴美不論是進行短期的觀光或商務活動，除了需上網填具繁複的表格外，還要與美國在台協會 (AIT) 預約面談，整個申請簽證時間約需數週；自 11 月 1 日起，國人赴美只要是從事 90 天以內的商務或觀光活動，只要上網申請旅行授權電子系統 (ESTA) 許可，在幾分鐘內即可完成線上申請。

美國在台協會指出，申請 ESTA 會得到「許可」、「處理中」、「拒絕」等回復，若申請被拒絕，就得親自前往 AIT 辦理簽證。不過，除了逾期居留、先前的犯罪記錄等因素可能被駁回申請外，基本上只要符合條件的申請都會核准，只有少數例外的案件，才需親往辦理。

此外，若是赴美停留時間超過 90 天以上，以及有意在美國工作（包括新聞與媒體工作者、寄宿幫傭、實習生等）或求學 (F 簽證)、參加交換訪客計畫 (J 簽證)，或是移民美國等，仍要親自赴 AIT 辦理簽證。

外交部長林永樂指出，國人赴美免簽將帶來很大效益，將使台美經貿、旅遊、文教交流進一步提升。

為回應美國政府給予我國國民免簽證停留 90 天的待遇，台灣也決定自 11 月 1 日起，調整美國國民來台免簽證之停留期限，由現行的 30 天延長至 90 天。

## 法規鬆綁

### 券商海外業務鬆綁

金管會放寬證券商自行買賣外國有價證券相關規定，包括放寬券商投資外國有價證券的範圍及額度，以及接受專業投資人委託買賣外國政府公債、其他外國債券及證券化商品之信用評等至 BB 等級以上。

此次修訂法令後，金管會刪除證券商自行買賣海外有價證券應在 11 個國家、18 個交易所交易的限制，擴大券商可以買賣的海外有價證券範圍，包括券商有興趣的新興市場如越南、泰國等，但排除中國大陸。

此外，券商投資債權性質的標的及店頭市場避險交易，相對人的信用評等規範從原本要 BBB 級以上，擴增為 BB 級以上即可；同時，也開放券商可以自行買賣本國企業赴海外發行的有價證券（含普通公司債），例如台灣企業發行的人民幣債券等。

券商投資外國有價證券及衍生性金融商品避險交易的支出總額，原本是依據信評分級，為券商淨值的 2% 到 10% 不等，在法令修訂後，總交易額度可提高為券商淨值的 30%；估計符合資格的全體券商海外投資總額，將可從原本的 300 億元擴增為 984 億元。

金管會表示，證券商因擔任境外 ETF（Exchange Traded Fund）或國外成分證券 ETF 之參與證券商，所持有的部位可納入境外避險額度。

在接受專業投資人委託業務範圍，金管會也鬆綁相關法令，包含券商受託買賣（複委託）國外有價證券，可不受當地國家主權評等限制。券商可以接受專業投資人委託買賣的有價證券範圍，例如買賣外國中央政府債券、其他外國債券及證券化商品，評等也從 BBB 級以上放寬為 BB 級以上。

## 外人僱外傭門檻下降

為友善外國人來台工作環境，勞委會將放寬在台灣工作的外國人申請外傭資格，未來外國人每月薪資在新台幣 15 萬元以上，或年薪 200 萬元以上，並曾在國外僱用外籍幫傭 1 年以上，就可申請外傭。

勞委會表示，此項措施預計在今年底或明年初實施，估計在申請標準放寬後，約有 2,400 名在台工作的外國人可受惠。目前法令規定，在台工作的外國人申請外籍幫傭，必須月薪在 25 萬元以上或年薪 300 萬元以上，同時外傭的來源國限於馬來西亞、印尼、越南、泰國及蒙古等地。

勞委會說明，此次鬆綁在台工作外國人僱用外傭資格後，如果白領外勞在公告期內徵不到合適的外傭，就可申請以前僱用的外傭來台。

## 陸資來台審核簡化

經濟部簡化陸資來台審核程序，投資金額在新台幣 8,000 萬元以下、不具敏感性的投資案，將由投資審議委員會內部審查即可，審查時間將從 1 個月縮短為 1 至 2 週。

根據投審會統計，自 2009 年 6 月開放陸資來台至今年 8 月底止，核准陸資投資案為 294 件，其中，約 9 成投資金額在 8,000 萬元以下。

經濟部表示，投審會每月下旬固定邀集相關部會召開會議，共同審查投資案，以致投資金額較小的陸資案，也需等待審議委員會通過，才能執行；設定審查金額下限後，投資金額在 8,000 萬以下之投資案，由投審會內部審查即可，將有助加速陸資來台時程。

經濟部表示，未來除出版、新聞媒體、個人資料庫、金融、晶圓、面板、第二類電信等高度敏感性產業，只要產業類別的主管機關未簽注意見，投資金額在 8,000 萬元以下的陸資投資案，審查時間可望縮減至 1 至 2 週。



## 國際評比

### 台灣經商環境排名躍升

根據世界銀行發布的 2013 年全球經商環境報告，台灣經商便利度在全球 185 個經濟體中排名第 16，比去年進步 9 名，再創台灣歷年來最佳成績，甚至超越加拿大、德國、日本等先進國家。

世銀經商環境報告主要評鑑經濟體之經商法規，對促進企業經營的便利程度，共涵蓋 10 個指標。台灣在這 10 項評比指標中，有 3 項指標進步顯著，其中「申請建築許可」進步 67 名最多，「投資人保護」進步 47 名居次，「繳納稅款」進步 10 名；另「跨境貿易」進步 4 名。

世銀在報告中指出，台灣經商便利度大幅進步，包括簡化申辦建築許可程序，一站式的服務讓申請建築許可更簡便，排名也從去年的 76 名一舉爬升到第 9 名，是進步幅度最大的指標；而台灣去年通過投資人保護相關條文，以及增修關係人交易規定，使得台灣在「投資人保護」指標的全球排名也大幅進步，從去年的 79 名前進到 32 名。

其餘表現較好的指標包括電力取得，排名全球第 6，破產處理排名第 15、開辦企業排名第 16、跨境貿易第 23 名。

經建會表示，未來將協同相關部會繼續改革，首要目標在 2013 年完成貿易單一窗口的建置、引進「少數股東不公平救濟制度」，並研議建置專業的商業法庭或專庭，以簡化訴訟程序，以及參考聯合國「擔保交易立法指南」，發展動產擔保等制度。Ⓔ



# Taiwan New Economy Newsletter

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## News Express

### Increased foreign worker ratio will spur industrial development

The government has decided to increase the ratio of foreign workers that industrial enterprises are allowed to hire, a move that will help meet the needs of industrial development, fill the shortage of industrial labor in Taiwan, and further stimulate investment. The hiring ratio for foreign workers will be boosted for nine industries, by up to 15% of their total workforce, after payment of an additional employment stabilization fee. Preferential measures will also be offered for returning overseas Taiwanese investors and for new projects in order to encourage enterprises to expand their investment in Taiwan.

Under Taiwan's current law governing the hiring of foreign workers, the so-called "3K" industries (this is adopted from the Japanese kitsui, kitanai, and kiken industries; in English it would be "3D," or difficult, dirty, and dangerous) are allowed to employ foreign workers, on a graded five-ratio system of 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, and 35% (and so is termed the "3K5" system), for jobs that local citizens are unwilling to take. In free trade zones, the ratio is up to 40%.

The Council of Labor Affairs (CLA) wants to increase the hiring quotas in response to changes in the domestic operating environment. For plastic safety helmet manufacturing, cleaning product manufacturing, and cosmetics manufacturing, the quota for foreign workers will be 20%, 15%, and 15%, respectively; for garment and accessory manufacturing, luggage and hand-carry bag manufacturing, and chilled and frozen meat manufacturing, the ratio will be raised from 20% to 25%; for printed circuit board manufacturing and semiconductor packaging and testing, the ratio will be heightened from 10% to 15%; and for bicycle parts manufacturing the figure will be boosted from 15% to 20%.

The CLA indicates that in addition to the nine industries mentioned above, enterprises in other industries that need to hire more foreign workers may do so, up to an additional ratio of 15%, so long as they pay the employment stabilization fee for each one. Under the existing system, the employment stabilization fee for each foreign worker is about NT\$2,000; for an enterprises that wants to hire an additional 1%-5%, 6%-10%, or 11%-15% foreign workers, the employment stabilization fee for each worker will be NT\$3,000, NT\$5,000, or NT\$7,000, respectively.

Overseas Taiwanese companies that return to invest in Taiwan or initiate new investment projects on the island will be offered even better foreign worker quotas. Taiwanese enterprises that have invested in mainland China for at least two years, that conform to the required conditions, and that are approved by the Ministry of Economic Affairs will be given an additional foreign-worker quota of 15% or 20%. If a transnational Taiwanese company sets up an R&D center or operations headquarters in Taiwan, it will be given an additional quota of 15%; a Taiwanese enterprise that has its own brand and markets at least 50% of its products internationally, that is one of the top five suppliers in an international supply chain or is evaluated as holding a key position in a supply chain, or that operates in an industry that produces high-value-added products or key parts and components will be given an additional quota of 20%, up to a maximum total ratio of 40%.

The Executive Yuan adds that the threshold for investment by the Taiwanese companies described above will be NT\$500 million for high-tech companies and NT\$100 million for other enterprises, and they will be required to create jobs for at least 100 domestic workers within one year. Companies meeting the above conditions that return to invest in Taiwan will be offered a five-year holiday from the payment of the employment stabilization fee in addition to enjoying additional foreign-worker quotas.

New domestic investment projects that conform to the 3K5 system will be able to add an extra foreign-worker quota of 5%, and traditional industries that invest NT\$100 million or more, and high-tech industries that invest NT\$500 million or more, will be allowed to add 10% to their foreign-worker quotas up to a maximum of 40%. They will also be exempt from payment of the employment stabilization fee for three years, after which they will revert to payment of the fee as required by current law.

The Executive Yuan estimates that new domestic investment projects and investment projects implemented by returning overseas Taiwanese enterprises will together receive an additional quota of 80,000 foreign workers and will add 120,000 jobs for domestic workers. The CLA reports that Article 46, Paragraph 1 of the Employment Services Act is now being amended to provide for the additional foreign-worker quotas, and the relaxation is projected to be implemented at the end of this year. Applications for additional quotas will have to be submitted by December 31, 2014.

### **Model universities to cultivate academic-industry talent**

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has mapped out a four-year "Model Science and Technology University Development Program" (tentative translation) to fill the gap between industry and education and help domestic manpower development conform to the needs of industry. An estimated eight to 12 science and technology universities throughout Taiwan will be chosen and guided in building up an industrial innovation and R&D environment, and cultivating made-to-order talent.

In March this year the MOE inaugurated a model university trial operation involving six schools: the National Taipei University of Technology, National Yunlin University of Science and Technology, Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology, National Taiwan University of Science and Technology, National Pingtung University of Science and Technology, and

National Kaohsiung University of Applied Sciences. Two other schools, Cheng Shiu University and Lunghwa University of Science and Technology, are being assisted in establishing academic-industry R&D centers.

The National Taipei University of Technology is emulating the Swiss apprentice system by carrying out an industry-academic human resources development plan, and has signed an apprentice program agreement with the SHL Group of Hong Kong to help students gain practical skills that meet the needs of the job market. The National Taiwan University of Science and Technology has set up an Innovative Motion Sensing Applications Laboratory together with the ASUS computer company in a bid for the US\$11.8 billion worth of business opportunities offered by the motion sensing industry. The Southern Taiwan University of Science and Technology is developing "interactive multimedia entertainment facilities" technology, cultivating interactive multimedia talent, and negotiating with prominent movie companies for school-industry cooperation and technology transfer in special effects production. The National Pingtung University of Science and Technology is promoting internships abroad for its students, and has signed agreements with almost 100 overseas institutions for the provision of internships; it has also established an integrated interdisciplinary school-industry platform, through which its veterinary department has already boosted the production value of fowl vaccine by about NT\$290 million.

To extend and expand the effects of its plan's implementation, the MOE will seek an infusion of funds from the government's infrastructure and technology projects with the aim of helping eight to 12 science and technology universities integrate teaching, intellectual property, and industrial resources in their areas and become model science and technology universities within the next four years.

The MOE indicates that in addition to helping schools strengthen their internship programs, set up industrial colleges together with enterprises, and



establish human resources development programs, the Model Science and Technology University Development Program will also reinforce university-industry cooperation and bring about a seamless linkage between the two through the building or rebuilding of multifunctional practical training factories, trial mass production centers for R&D results, product design centers, university-industry operations centers, innovation incubators, and simulation facilities for specified production lines.

### **Taiwan added to U.S. visa-waiver list**

Beginning on November 1, 2012, holders of new ROC passports containing IC chips who have household registrations in Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, or Matsu and national ID cards may visit the United States visa-free for up to 90 days for business or tourism purposes. All they have to do is go online and obtain permission from the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) before traveling.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced at the first of October that Taiwan would be added to the visa-waiver program and become the 37th country afforded visa-free treatment there. The spokesperson for Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Steve Hsia, said that the greatest significance of this move is its reflection of increased bilateral trust and the confidence of the U.S. in the progress that the Taiwanese people have made.

In addition to filling out complicated forms online, in the past Taiwanese citizens wishing to visit the U.S. for short-term tourism or business purposes had to go to the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) for an interview. The whole process could take several weeks. Now, all they need do is spend a few minutes completing the ESTA procedure online.

The AIT notes that applicants for online authorization to visit the U.S. will receive one of three replies: approved, pending, or disapproved. If an

application is disapproved, the applicant will have to apply personally at AIT. In general, however, applications will be approved unless the applicant has previously overstayed a visa, has a criminal record, or some similar issue.

Travelers who want to stay in the U.S. for longer than 90 days, take up employment there (including news media workers, au pairs, student interns, etc.), attend school (F visas), participate in exchange-visitor programs (J visas), or immigrate still have to apply for their visas personally at AIT.

Foreign Minister David Lin noted that visa free entry into the U.S. for ROC citizens will bring great benefits and further upgrade bilateral economic, travel, educational, and cultural exchanges between the two countries.

In response to the American government's affording of 90-day visa-free treatment to ROC citizens, the Taiwan government has extended the maximum period of visa-free stay in Taiwan for U.S. citizens from 30 to 90 days, also effective November 1.

## Deregulation Progress

### Rules eased for overseas business of securities firms

The Financial Supervisory Commission (FSC) has relaxed the rules for proprietary trading in foreign securities by securities dealers. Restrictions on both the scope and amount of investment by securities dealers in foreign securities have been loosened, and the minimum credit rating for foreign government bonds, other foreign bonds, and securitized products bought and sold on behalf of professional investors has been lowered to BB.

In its recent revision of the regulations, the FSC eliminated the restriction on proprietary trading in foreign securities by securities dealers to 11 countries and 18 exchanges, and expanded the scope of permitted trading to include

emerging markets in which securities dealers are interested, such as Vietnam and Thailand, but not mainland China.

In addition, for dealers investing in debt instruments and over-the-counter hedging, the minimum credit rating of the counterparts involved has been lowered from BBB to BB. At the same time, securities dealers may now engage in the proprietary purchase and sale of securities (including ordinary corporate bonds)—such as renminbi bonds—overseas issued by Taiwan enterprises.

The total amount of investment by securities dealers in foreign securities and hedging derivatives, which was originally set at between 2% and 10% of the net value of the dealers depending on credit rating, has been raised to 30% of net value. This will boost the total amount of overseas investment by all qualified securities dealers from the original NT\$30 billion to an estimated NT\$98.4 billion.

The FSC notes that the positions held by participating dealers in offshore exchange traded funds (ETFs) or ETFs with overseas components can be included in the dealers' offshore hedging quotas.

The FSC has also expanded the scope of business carried out by securities dealers on behalf of professional investors to include the consignment (or re-consignment) trading of overseas securities without regard to the sovereign credit ratings of the countries involved.

The minimum credit rating for securities that securities dealers are allowed to trade on consignment for professional investors, such as foreign central government bonds, other foreign bonds, and securitized products, has also been lowered from BBB to BB.

## Relaxed conditions for hiring of domestic helpers

The Council of Labor Affairs (CLA) plans to make the Taiwan environment more friendly to foreign professionals by relaxing the rules so that foreigners who have a salary of at least NT\$150,000 a month or NT\$2 million a year, and who have employed a foreign domestic helper for at least one year overseas, to hire a foreign domestic helper in Taiwan.

The CLA estimates that this measure, which it expects to implement at the end of this year or in early 2013, will benefit approximately 2,400 foreigners working in Taiwan.

Under the current law, foreigners working in Taiwan must have salaries of at least NT\$250,000 per month or NT\$3 million per year before they are eligible to hire a foreign domestic helper, and may only employ a home help from Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand or Mongolia.

The CLA explains that if an eligible foreign white-collar worker is unable to recruit a suitable foreign domestic helper within the announcement period, the worker can apply to bring his or her previous foreign domestic helper to Taiwan.

## Faster examination provided for Chinese investments in Taiwan

Under a new simplification by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) of examination procedures for mainland Chinese investments in Taiwan, examination of Chinese investments of under NT\$80 million that are not sensitive in nature will be completed in just one to two weeks. This is a vast improvement over the one month that was required in the past.



According to statistics compiled by the MOEA's Investment Commission, approved Chinese investment in Taiwan from June of 2009 (when such investment was first allowed) to the end of August this year amounted to 294 cases, about 90% of which involved amounts under NT\$80 million.

According to the MOEA, the Investment Commission calls a meeting of related ministries and commissions in the latter part of each month to examine investment cases, and in the past Chinese projects involving even a small amount of investment could not be implemented until they were approved by the commission. After the recent change, the Investment Commission will be able to decide internally on cases involving less than NT\$80 million of Chinese investment, thus speeding up the progress of such investment projects.

The MOEA indicates that with the exception of highly sensitive industries, such as publishing, news media, personal databases, finance, silicon wafers, display panels, and Type II telecommunications, the examination of Chinese applications for the investment of under NT\$80 million in Taiwan will be completed within one to two weeks unless the agency in charge of the industries concerned expresses reservations.

## **International Ranking**

### **Taiwan soars in "Doing Business" rankings**

According to the World Bank's "Doing Business 2013" report, Taiwan's "Ease of Doing Business" ranking has jumped from 16th to 9th place among the 185 economies covered. This is Taiwan's best showing ever, putting it ahead of Canada, Germany, and Japan.

The "Ease of Doing Business" ranking is based primarily on evaluation of how conducive the regulatory environment is to the starting and operation of a local company. In the latest ranking, Taiwan has made substantial progress

in three of the 10 subindexes used; the biggest advance—of 67 places—was made in the "dealing with construction permits" subindex, followed by 47 places in the "protecting investors" subindex and 10 places in the "paying taxes" subindex. Taiwan also advanced four places in the "trading across borders" subindex.

The World Bank's report pointed out that Taiwan's improvements in business convenience includes the simplification of application procedures for construction permits, with one-stop service making application vastly easier. This improvement boosted Taiwan from 76th place to 9th place in the "dealing with construction permits" subindex. Taiwan's implementation of regulations to improve investor protection last year, and its addition of rules on insider trading helped to raise the island's global ranking in the "protecting investors" subindex from 79th place to 32nd.

Taiwan also did well in other subindexes: "getting electricity," with a ranking of 6th; "resolving insolvency," 15th; "starting a business," 16th; and "trading across borders," 23rd.

The Council for Economic Planning and Development says that it will work with other ministries and commissions to bring about further improvements in the future. Its primary objectives are to complete the installation of a single window for trade, introduce a minority shareholder remedies system, map out the establishment of a specialized commercial court to simplify litigation procedures, and develop a personal property security system in 2013. 