## **TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC SITUATION AND OUTLOOK**



### Council for Economic Planning and Development Executive Yuan, Taiwan, R.O.C. March 2006

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### **GLOBAL ECONOMY**

#### Latest World Bank forecasts (November 2005)

- $\Rightarrow$ World economic growth is forecast to be 3.2 % in 2006.
- ⇒High-income economies: The pace of the expansion in the high-income countries is forecast to increase slightly over the next two years, with acceleration in Europe offsetting a modest slowing in Japan and stable growth in the United States.
- ⇒ Developing economies: Continued high oil prices, coupled with inflationary pressures, are expected to restrain growth in most developing countries over the next two years. Nevertheless, GDP in these economies should expand by around 5.5%, much more quickly than during the past two decades.
- The outlook for oil prices is particularly uncertain. A significant supply disruption could slow global growth, with large negative consequences for global economic prospects.
- ⇒ The future path of interest rates are still low despite recent increases. Persistent global current account imbalances, signs of rising inflation, and concerns about the sustainability of government finances in industrialized countries are all factors that could push rates higher and possibly provoke a serious slowdown.
- ⇒World Trade: The goods and service trade is expected to increase 6.2% in 2005 before strengthening to 7.0% in 2006.

## **World Economic Outlook**

%

	W	orld Ba	nk	Glo	Global Ins		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	
World Economic Growth	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.2	
United States	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.3	2.7	
Japan	2.3	1.8	1.7	2.5	2.2	2.0	
Euro area	1.1	1.4	2.0	1.4	2.0	1.6	
East Asia and the Pacific	7.8	7.6	7.4	-	-		
Asia-Pacific excluding Japan	-			6.7	6.7	6.4	
Asian NIEs*	4.0	4.4		-	-		
China	9.9	9.2		9.9	9.4	8.8	
World Trade Volume Growth	6.2	7.0	7.3	-	-	-	

\*South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Taiwan. Sources: 1. Forecasts by World Bank released on various dates. 2. Global Insight, February 2006.

### **Asian Tigers and China: Economic Growth**

China's growth continued to run at various robust rates above 9% in 2005, while the NIEs have been affected by higher oil prices, higher dollar interest rates and slower demand growth in global high-tech markets. However, the pace of activity in the NIEs was already reviving in the third quarter except Singapore.



Sources: World Bank; Directorate General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics.

#### **Economic Growth**

The pace of expansion decelerated to 2.7% in the first half of 2005, due to a worldwide slowdown. Thanks to the upswing in the global consumer electronics market, exports and manufacturing production strengthened in the second half of 2005. Meanwhile, private consumption steadily picked up as unemployment continued narrowing. Economic growth is preliminarily estimated to be 5.4% in the second half.

					Domes	stic deman	d			Net foreign demand				
	Economic		Consu	mption	Gro	oss fixed ca	pital formation	on	Increase		Exports	Less: Imports		
	growth (yoy)	Total	Private	Gov't	Subtotal	Private sector	Public enterprises	Gov't	in inventory	Total	of goods & services	of goods & services		
2000	5.8	3.8	2.8	0.1	2.1	2.4	-0.1	-0.2	-1.2	2.0	8.5	6.5		
2001	-2.2	-4.6	0.4	0.1	-4.7	-4.4	0.03	-0.3	-0.4	2.5	-4.2	-6.7		
2002	4.3	1.6	1.5	0.3	-0.1	0.5	-0.03	-0.6	-0.01	2.6	5.1	2.5		
2003	3.4	0.7	0.6	0.1	-0.2	-0.03	-0.1	-0.04	0.3	2.7	5.7	3.0		
2004	6.1	6.3	2.3	-0.1	3.1	3.7	-0.4	-0.2	1.0	-0.2	8.2	8.5		
2005p	4.1	1.6	1.8	0.1	0.1	-0.2	0.3	0.01	-0.4	2.5	4.2	1.6		
Q1	2.5	2.7	1.6	-0.1	1.7	1.3	0.4	0.0	-0.6	-0.2	1.2	1.4		
Q2	3.0	3.2	1.7	0.1	1.5	1.3	0.2	-0.1	-0.01	-0.3	1.9	2.2		
Q3	4.4	2.9	2.2	0.1	0.1	-0.3	0.2	0.1	0.6	1.5	4.1	2.6		
$Q4_{\rm f}$	6.4	-2.4	1.5	0.2	-2.8	-3.0	0.3	0.02	-1.4	8.8	9.3	0.5		

#### **Contribution to Economic Growth** (in percentage points)

p: Preliminary; f: Forecast; r: Revised.

Source: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics (DGBAS), 192nd Commission on National Income Statistics Meeting, February 23, 2006.

#### Foreign Trade

- ⇒Exports and imports softened in 2005, with two-way trade increasing 8.5%. Exports expanded by 4.5% in the first month of 2006, while imports contracted by 7.0%.
- ⇒Trade surplus grew to US\$15.8 billion in 2005, from US\$13.6 billion in 2004. It posted US\$2.3 billion in January 2006, from US\$0.5 billion during the same month last year.

	Tr	ade	Ex	ports	Im	ports	Balance	
	Value	Growth	Value	Growth	Value	Growth	Dalance	
1999	234.9	7.9	123.7	9.9	111.2	5.7	12.5	
2000	292.7	24.6	151.9	22.8	140.7	26.6	11.2	
2001	234.3	-20.0	126.3	-16.9	108.0	-23.3	18.3	
2002	248.6	6.1	135.3	7.1	113.2	4.9	22.1	
2003	278.6	12.1	150.6	11.3	128.0	13.0	22.6	
2004	351.1	26.0	182.3	21.1	168.8	31.8	13.6	
2005	381.1	8.5	198.4	8.8	182.6	8.2	15.8	
2006 Jan	31.4	-1.1	16.8	4.5	14.5	-7.0	2.3	

#### **Foreign Trade**

US\$ billion; yoy %

Note: Trade data are adjusted according to the United Nations IMTS Compilers Manual (2004). Total exports include "exports" and "re-exports," and total imports include "imports" and "reimports." Source: Ministry of Finance.

#### Major trading partners

- Imports from Hong Kong and Mainland China have expanded the fastest since 2002, while exports to the ASEAN have gained relatively more importance.
- ⇒ Trade shares of the United States, Europe and Japan have narrowed in contrast to the increasing shares of Hong Kong and China, and ASEAN.

#### **Changes in Two-way Trade with Major Trading Partners**

Yoy %

				E	xports				Imports					
		USA	Japan	Europe	Hong Kong and Mainland China	ASEAN 6*	USA	Japan	Europe	Hong Kong and Mainland China	ASEAN 6*			
1999		5.2	27.6	3.5	11.3	21.3	0.1	13.3	-14.6	9.2	15			
2000	Share	12.7 25	.4 <sup>39.5</sup> 9	16.7 .8 10	6.7 24.5 23.9	29.3 5 10.4	27.6 1	7.8 26	8.1 27.6 15	5.9 27.1 6.0	40.4 12.7			
2001		-20.6	-23.1	-16.5	-10.8	-21.6	-27.4	-33.0	-21.2	-7.8	-21.2			
2002		-3.2	-6.1	-6.3	28.7	2.9	-0.7	5.5	-2.3	24.9	3.7			
2003		-3.1	-0.5	10.2	22.1	8.9	-7.0	19.6	10.9	31.0	5.4			
2004		8.4	10.8	14.6	28.3	33.7	28.6	33.7	31.1	48.0	16.1			
2005		1.4	9.7	-0.8	12.2	14.5	-3.0	5.3	2.3	16.2	3.9			
2006	Jan	13.0	-4.4	4.0	0.3	5.2	-23.7	-20.8	-17.8	0.5	-1.7			
	Share	15	5.6 7	7.4 12	2.6 37.	7 13.4	1	0.5 2	1.6 11	.6 13.2	. 11.4			

\*ASEAN6 refers to Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Source: Ministry of Finance.

#### **Domestic Investment**

Private investment expanded at a rate above 9% in the first half of 2005, thanks to expansions in the airline, high-tech, and high-speed railway sectors. It fell in the second half, however, following the outward movement of some manufacturing capacities. Government investment increased at a modest 0.3% in 2005 with the implementation of the New Ten Projects, while investment by public enterprises expanded substantially in power plants and the sixth naphtha cracker.

	Total		Private i	nvestment		nterprises stment	Government investment		
	Amount	Growth rate	Amount	Growth rate	Amount	Growth rate	Amount	Growth rate	
2000	2384.9	9.0	1,665.5	15.6	231.3	-3.0	488.2	-4.1	
2001	1910.0	-19.9	1,218.6	-26.8	234.6	1.4	456.8	-6.4	
2002	1898.0	-0.6	1,268.2	4.1	231.6	-1.3	398.3	-12.8	
2003	1880.9	-0.9	1,264.9	-0.3	222.1	-4.1	394.0	-1.1	
2004	2209.6	17.5	1,656.4	31.0	181.7	-18.2	371.5	-5.7	
2005 <sub>p</sub>	2219.8	0.5	1,634.1	-1.3	213.0	17.2	372.7	0.3	
Q1	498.0	10.8	390.2	10.5	35.1	48.8	72.6	-0.1	
Q2	578.8	7.4	441.6	9.0	49.9	14.8	87.4	-3.2	
Q3	550.4	0.3	403.6	-2.0	49.8	14.3	97.0	3.8	
Q4 <sub>p</sub>	592.6	-11.9	398.7	-18.0	78.2	10.0	115.7	0.6	

#### Gross Fixed Capital Formation (at 2001 prices)

NT\$ billion; yoy %

Note: All national account data are revised according to System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA).

f: Forecast. p: Preliminary. r: Revised.

Source: DGBAS, 192nd Commission on National Income Statistics Meeting, February 23, 2006.

#### **Production**

Industrial production in softened in the first half of 2005, but has displayed much more strength since August, increasing 3.4% for the whole year. It went up higher in January 2006, with manufacturing and construction industries increasing 4.1% and 22.2%, respectively.

	Total	Mining	Manufacturing	Electricity, gas, and water	Construction
2001	-7.8	0.1	-8.4	1.1	-11.2
2002	7.9	8.3	9.4	3.3	-20.7
2003	7.1	-7.4	7.4	3.8	8.9
2004	9.9	-4.4	10.6	3.0	4.9
2005	3.4	-9.9	3.2	3.8	11.4
2006 Jan	4.4	-13.4	4.1	2.0	22.2

#### **Growth of Industrial Production**

%

Source: Ministry of Economic Affairs.

### **Employment**

Nonagricultural employment growth decelerated in 2005 and further in January 2006. The unemployment rate continued to display a declining trend, dropping to 3.8% in January 2006, the lowest since 2001.

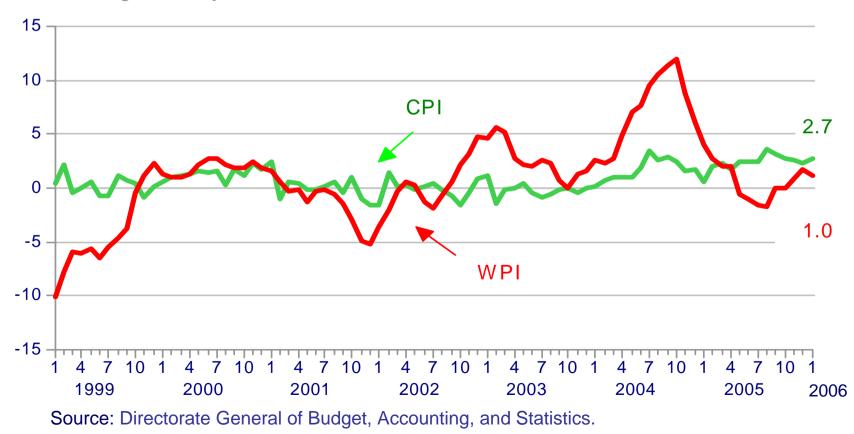
		Labo	or Force	Une	mployment	Nonagricultural employment		
		1,000 persons	Participation %	1,000 persons	Rate %	1,000 persons	yoy, %	
2001		9,832	57.2	450	4.57	8,677	-0.9	
2002		9,969	57.3	515	5.17	8,745	0.8	
2003		10,076	57.3	503	4.99	8,877	1.5	
2004		10,240	57.7	454	4.44	9,144	3.0	
2005		10,371	57.8	428	4.13	9,351	2.3	
2006	Jan	10,435	57.8	397	3.80	9,479	2.0	

Source: Directorate General of Budget, Accounting, and Statistics.

#### **Prices**

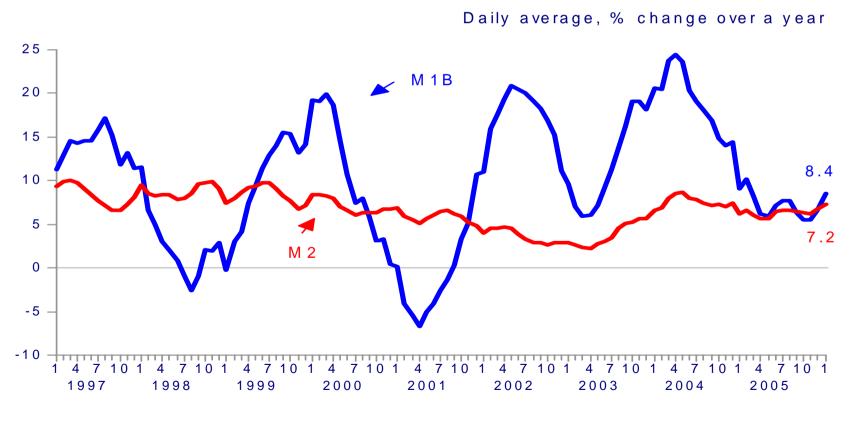
Prices increased moderately in 2006, with consumer prices up by 2.3%. Thanks to higher prices of energy as well as agricultural products, wholesale prices in January 2006 increased 1.0% from a year ago. Consumer prices rose 2.7%, driven up by rising food costs and energy prices, while core prices (excluding fresh food and energy prices) increasing 1.4%.

% change over a year



### Money Supply

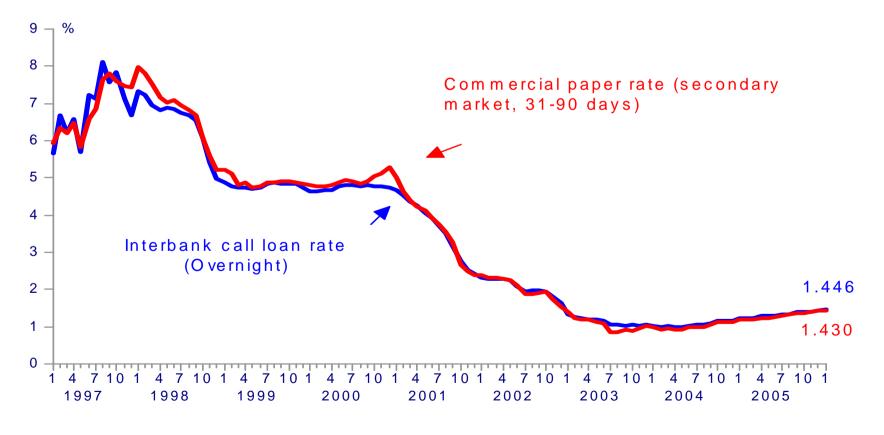
Monetary supply expansion slowed down since June 2004. In January 2006, M1B and M2 growth from the previous year recorded 8.4% and 7.2%, respectively. The slightly higher growth was due to a substantial increase in currency demand prior to the Chinese New Year holidays, and a rapid growth of bank loans and investments.



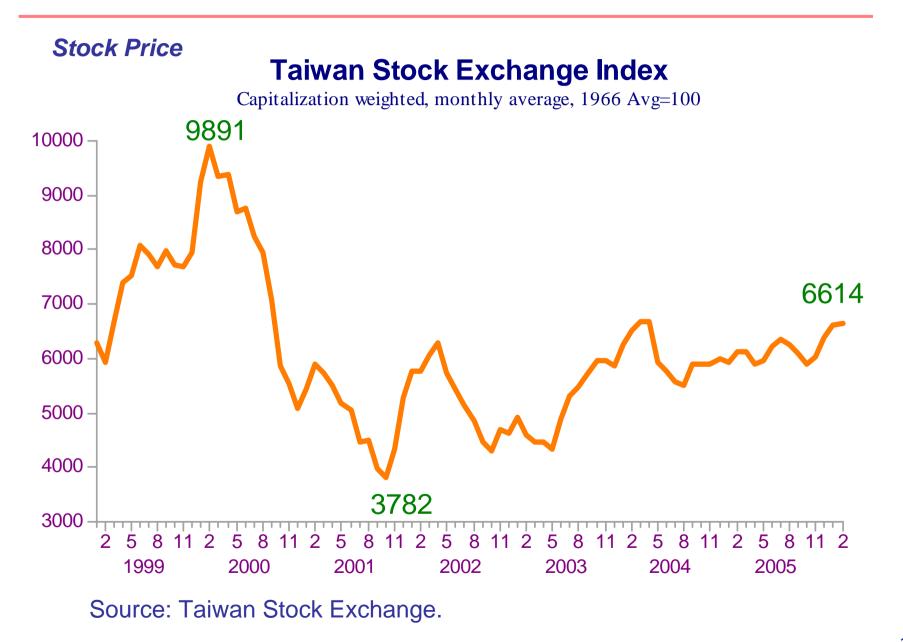
Source: Central Bank of China.

#### Short-term Interest Rates

Market interest rates have seen a slightly upward trend since the second half of 2004, but are still considered below their normal levels. In January 2006, commercial paper rate and interbank rate recorded 1.43% and 1.45%, respectively. The Central Bank raised the rediscount rate four times in 2005 from 1.75% to 2.25%.



Source: Central Bank of China.



### **Monitoring Indicators**

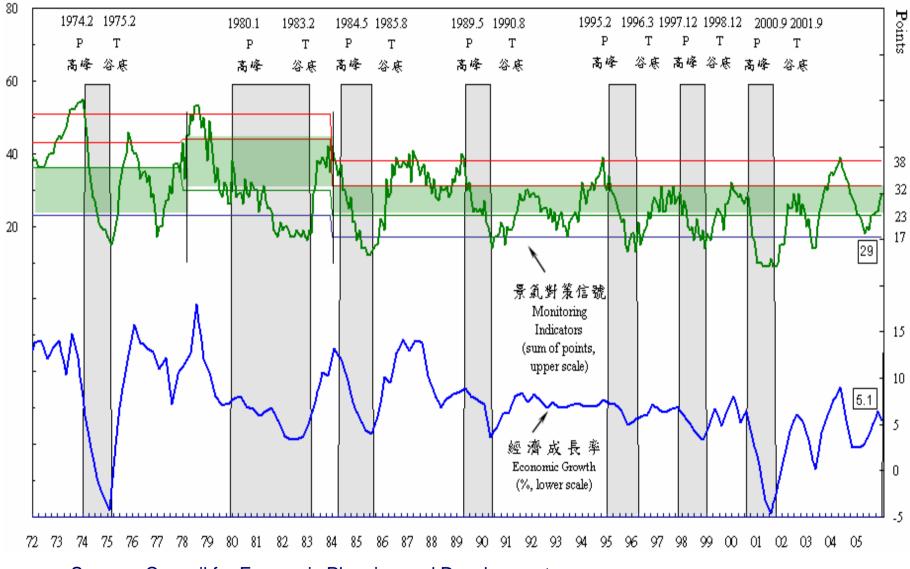
The monitoring indicators flashed "green" in January 2005, for the sixth time since August 2005, reflecting steadily gathering momentum of the economy.

							20	05						20	)06
		1	2	3	4	5	б	7	8	9	10	11	12		1
   Tot	Total Scores		$\bigcirc$						$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\supset$
			23	22	20	18	20	19	23	23	24	24	27 <sub>r</sub>	2	29
Sector	Monetary Aggregates M1B, yoy%	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	7.2
	Direct and Indirect Finance, yoy %				$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigtriangledown$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$						7.4
Financial	Bank Clearings and Remittance, yoy %				$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigtriangledown$	$\bigtriangledown$						$\bigcirc$	7.2
F <sub>11</sub>	Stock Price Index, 1966=100, yoy%					$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	11.7
	Manufacturing New Order Index, 1996\$, 1976.1=100, yoy %	$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	6.3 <sub>p</sub>
Sector	Exports, 2001\$, yoy %	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$			19.0 <sub>p</sub>
r Se	Industrial Production Index, 2001=100, yoy%		$\bigcirc$			$\bigcirc$		$\bigtriangledown$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$			13.5 <sub>p</sub>
Real	Manufacturing Inventory-to-Sales ratio, %	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	63.2 <sub>p</sub>
	Nonagricultural Employment, yoy%			$\bigcirc$		$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	$\bigcirc$	2.1
•	Overheating 😑 Transition in need of watching 🔵 Stea	dily mov	ring for	ward 🄇	🔵 Trai	nsition in	n need o	f watch	ing 🔿	Transit	lion in n	eed of v	atching		

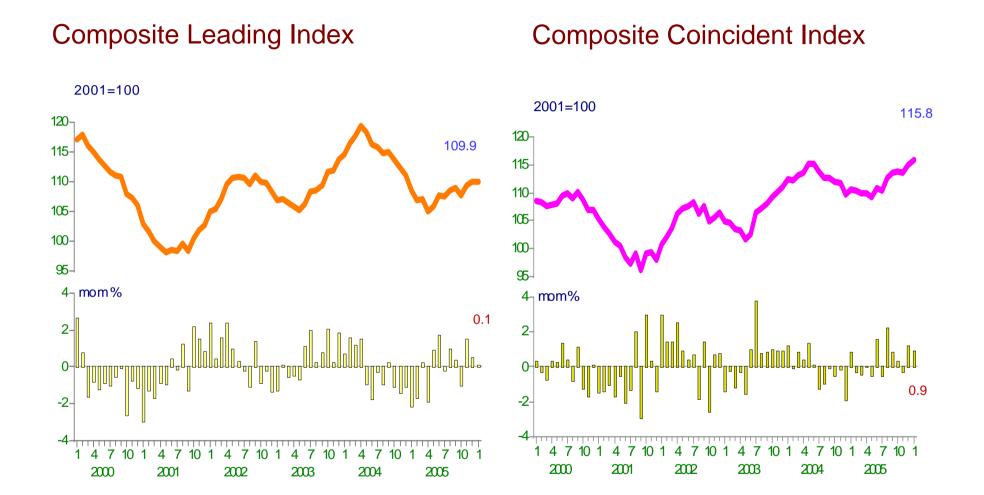
Note: All data, except stock price index, have been seasonally adjusted.

Source: Council for Economic Planning and Development.

### **Monitoring Indicators and Economic Growth**



Source: Council for Economic Planning and Development.



Source: CEPD.

### PROSPECTS

- In 2006, two-way trade is expected to expand in about the same pace as 2005, while private consumption will increase with improving job market. Private investment is estimated to see a more moderate rate of growth. In the public sector, government investment will keep up a positive growth, while public enterprise will undergo a contraction.
- ⇒ Growth in 2006 is forecasted to be around 4% by major domestic research institutions.

# FORECASTS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

			2005	2006
Forecasting institution	Release time	%	Difference from last projection	%
World Bank	Nov 2005	3.6	-0.6	4.1
IMF	Sep 2005	3.4	-0.6	4.3
Global-Insight	Feb 2006	3.7	+0.2	3.5
CIER	Dec 2005	3.65	+0.12	4.01
TIER	Jan 2006	3.73	+0.22	4.02
DGBAS	Feb 2006	4.09	+0.29	4.25
Academia Sinica	Dec 2005	3.83	+0.09	4.25

CIER: Chung-hua Institute for Economic Research, Taipei.

DGBAS: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Taiwan, ROC.

TIER: Taiwan Institute of Economic Research, Taipei.

### **Macroeconomic Targets**

- ⇒ The economy is targeted to grow 4.5% in 2006, with CPI increasing no more than 2.0% and unemployment rate staying below 4%.
- ⇒ Sources of targeted growth mainly come from private consumption and exports.

		<b>l Growth</b> Forecast)	Nomi	<b>cent of</b> nal GDP (Forecast)	<b>Contribution</b> Percentage pt.
GDP	4.5	(4.3)	100.0	(100.0)	4.50
Private consumption	3.8	(3.0)	62.7	(62.3)	2.17
Government consumption	1.1	(0.5)	13.0	(12.9)	0.13
Fixed capital formation	3.8	(1.8)	20.6	(19.9)	0.74
Private	4.8	(2.4)	15.3	(14.5)	0.70
Public enterprises	-1.6	(-2.5)	1.7	(1.7)	0.07
Government	2.3	(2.0)	3.7	(3.7)	-0.03
Exports of goods and services	8.0	(7.6)	66.5	(64.7)	4.90
Less: Imports of goods and services	6.8	(5.4)	62.9	(60.0)	3.50

\*Based on results of the target scenario.

Sources: Council for Economic Planning and Development.

Rising oil prices The inter-ministerial price monitoring taskforce met in October 1, 2005 and announced the lowering of commodity tax on oil products by 25% for three months until end of 2005 to lessen impact from the hiking oil price and diminish fears of inflation. Inflationary pressure and oil product market structure will be taken into consideration in designing oil price adjustment scheme.

#### ⇒ Cross-Strait economic and trade relations

- 1) The preparatory phase of cross-strait direct transportation links is already underway.
- 2) "Measures on cross-Strait freight facilitation" are to be announced at appropriate time.
- 3) The government is closely monitoring China's macroeconomic measures and their impact on the Chinese and Taiwanese economies.
- Proactive management and effective liberalization," proclaimed by the President in January, represents the new mindset and course of action for our future cross-Strait economic and trade policies.

#### ⇒ Fiscal reform

- 1) The government has drawn up plans for achieving a balanced budget within five to ten years.
- 2) A State-owned Property Management Committee has been formed to consolidate the management of state-owned properties to help increase government revenues.
- 3) The program to end exemptions from personal income tax of military personnel and elementary and high school teachers will be proceeded further.
- 4) Implement the alternative minimum tax to achieve equality of taxation while tending industrial development.
- 5) Tax exemptions and deductions of the income tax and Statute for Industrial Upgrading are being reviewed with a purpose to increasing equality, reasonability and simplicity.
- 6) Business tax will be raised to make up for revenue loss resultant from eliminations of taxable items in commodity tax and entertainment tax, and from the abolition of the stamp tax.

### ⇒ Financial reform

- 1)A plan to develop Taiwan as a regional financial services center has been launched to help form a funding center, to promote asset management business, to develop a variety of new financial products, and to strengthen the health of the financial market.
- 2)The government has stepped up efforts, including providing assistance to domestic banks in mergers and inviting foreign financial consultancies, to achieve the following goals:
  - ✓ Encouraging M&As to reduce the number of financial holding companies form 14 to 7 by the end of 2006;
  - ✓ Having at least one financial institution either managed by foreign institutions or listed in overseas markets by the end of 2006.

## **Development of Financial Services**

#### **Strategies**

- ⇒ Developing sound investment climate (deregulation and re-regulation)
- ⇒ Promoting regional fundraising center
- ⇒ Promoting asset management business
- ⇒ Developing diversified financial services
- ⇒ Strengthening the competence of financial market

#### **Top Priorities**

- ⇒ Build regional financial services center
- ⇒ Promote financial consolidation and speed up M&A
- ⇒ Ensure that laws governing the financial sector are sound, appropriate, and complete, and strengthen training of financial professionals
- ⇒ Strengthen financial supervision, effectively deal with non-performing loans, and improve the administration of the agricultural finance system
- Improve the soundness of the insurance and bond markets, develop the domestic asset management industry, and promote Taiwan's development as a regional fund-raising center

- ➡ Measures to increase employment For the long run, the government is promoting services with high potentials in production value, job creation, value-added, international competitiveness, and raising the quality of life. Among the list of such service industries are financial services, logistics/distribution/transportation, medical care, manpower training, tourism, cultural and creative, design, information, property management, R&D, environmental protection, and engineering consultancy.
- Measures to augment scientific and technological manpower Develop industrial S&T manpower with relevant graduate programs and vocational training programs, and recruit overseas professional manpower for work in Taiwan.

### **Services Industry Development**

#### Deregulation

Currently in Taiwan, with administrative responsibility for service industries scattered among different agencies, there is lack of any active approach and concrete planning to guide the sector's development through regulatory measures. The best way for the government to actively promote service industries' development would be to discard the regulatory mindset and put the onus on private enterprises to take charge of doing it for themselves.

#### Push for modernization of services

Presently, the government lacks understanding of how to commercialize agricultural and medical innovation and turn educational resources to industrial advantage, and so cannot easily play a leading role in market expansion. Therefore, it should simply concentrate on strengthening existing policies and market mechanisms for service sector development, releasing public resources and arousing private-sector vitality to lead the way.

#### Adopt a negative-list approach

At present, many laws and regulations concerning service industries adopt a 'positive-list' 'management' and approval approach. This should be replaced by a 'negative-list' approach that makes market entry easier and facilitates the introduction and development of new products.

#### Improve the legal and regulatory system

To promote service sector development, the whole body of related laws and regulations needs to be thoroughly overhauled, including those governing company management, land-use zoning, labor, environmental protection, intellectual property, etc., to remove obstacles created by outmoded laws and give service industries more room to grow and thrive.

#### **Strategies**

- Stimulus package: In November 2005, a wide-ranging list of revitalization efforts has been announced:
  - ✓ Revitalizing traditional industries
    - In addition to an NT\$90 billion program, lasting during 2001 and 2006, to provide industrial land and buildings for lease, another NT\$30 billion will be set aside for 2007-2009, which is anticipated to attract 305 firms and increase investment and production by NT\$107 billion and NT\$128.4 billion, respectively, and create 21,352 jobs.
    - The Medium- and Long-term Fund will appropriate a credit line of NT\$200 billion, for the procurement of software and hardware or industrial land, R&D investment by overseas Taiwanese businessmen for their investment projects in Taiwan. Loaners will bear a low interest rate of 1.97%, plus no more than 1.5 percentage points charged by banks.

### Stimulus package (continued)

- ✓ Revitalizing traditional industries
  - An amount of NT\$8.5 billion appropriated by the Development Fund will be provided to prospective investors for procurement of industrial land, in exchange of their shares. The measure is expected to attract 30 companies to invest in the industrial zones, involving investment capital of NT\$30 billion and production worth of NT\$36 billion.
  - Measures have been adopted to increase local laborer employment, lessen occupational injuries, improve work effectiveness, and improve shortages in the so-called "difficult" industries, where working conditions are dirty, dangerous and generally "difficult".

#### ⇒Stimulus package (continued)

- ✓ Improving living conditions
  - -The government will provide farmers with subsidies of NT\$45,000 per hectare and a NT\$15,000 subsidy on their production expenses, with the goal of seeing farmland growing biomass energy crops. It is estimated that the income of fallow farmers will increase by NT\$18,000 per hectare.
  - –A sum of NT\$200 billion low-interest loans will be provided for urban renewal programs between 2006 and 2008, which the Cabinet estimates will generate NT\$500 billion in production value and provide 130,000 new job opportunities.
  - -The Cabinet is planning to promote industries with local tribal characteristics and designate at least 15 tourism locations as "aboriginal tribe attractions." In addition, it has earmarked an NT\$6.12 billion budget to enhance employment among aborigines, which is expected to create some 3,000 jobs, increase their average income by NT\$30,000 to NT\$50,000 per person per month, and provide vocational training to more than 4,000 people every year.

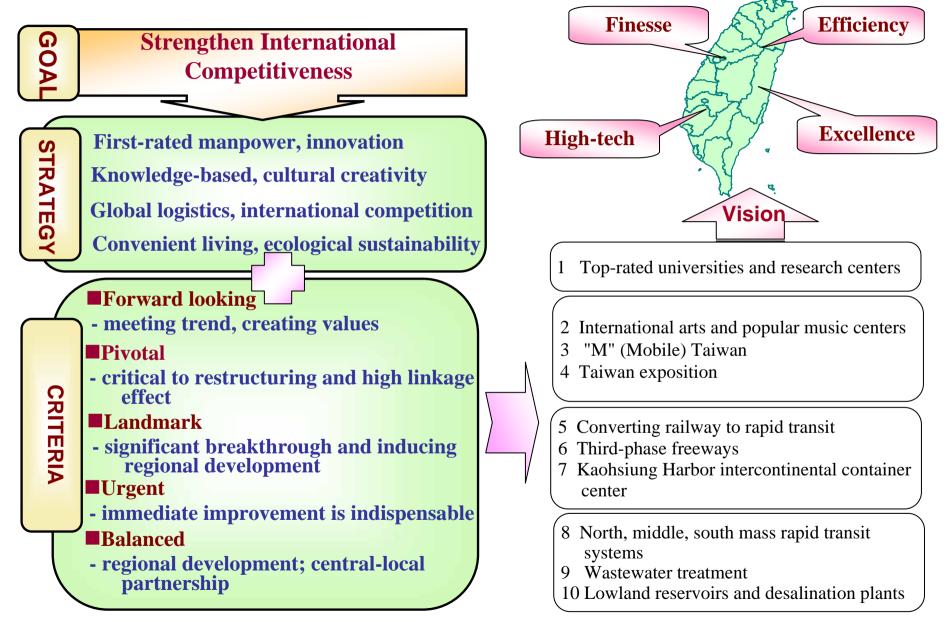
#### ⇒ Stimulus package (continued)

- ✓ Improving living conditions
  - The standard income tax deduction will be increased for married couples beginning 2005 tax year and general exemptions and deductions will be adjusted for inflation for the 2006 tax year. The step is expected to lessen burden on taxpayers by NT\$19,000 per household and boost domestic private disposable income by NT\$4 billion.
  - Exemptions and deductions for inheritance and gift taxes beginning January 1, 2006 will lessen burden from these two taxes by NT\$590,000 and NT\$13,000, respectively, per case on average.
  - The futures transaction statute will be revised in order to reduce taxes on futures transactions, including cuts of 60% for securities futures and 20% for securities options or commodities futures contracts.
  - Lunar New Year cross-strait charter routes for 2006 were extended to Xiamen, and was opened to anyone who possesses valid visas for Taiwan and China. Total flights were expected to increase from 48 to 72, offering 30,000 seats and allowing passengers to save between 1.5 to 4.5 hours and NT\$2,000 to NT\$5,000. The government will continue to urge the mainland side to engage in consultations for regular flights to expedite air cargo shipments and to promote tourism.

#### 2. The Medium-term National Development Plan (2005-2008)

- ⇒ The comprehensive plan is designed to foster economic, science, technology and education, environmental, social, and institutional development.
- ⇒ The vision of a "green silicon island," as proposed in the previous medium-term plan, is reiterated, and will be pursued while meeting new challenges from global competition, and addressing domestic issues of ageing, environmental conservation, and social harmony.
- $\Rightarrow$  The major policy directions include:
  - 1) To continue investment in manpower development, R&D, global logistics, infrastructure, and living environment. Top priority is given to promote the New Ten Projects for full-fledged implementation.
  - 2) To develop industrial clusters such as Hsinchu biology park, science parks in central and southern Taiwan.
  - 3) To promote further two-trillion, two-star industries, including semiconductor, image display, digital content, and biotech, while keeping up the development of communications, petrochemical, machinery and equipment, and iron and steel.
  - 4) To step up value-adding efforts for such traditional industries as high-tech textile, health food, high-end materials, chemicals for optic electronics.
  - 5) To carry out the guidelines and action programs for service sector development.
  - 6) To develop 7 free port zones and encourage businesses to set up operations headquarters in Taiwan.
  - 7) To build up a regional financial services center that will help increase the share of financial services in GDP from 11.5% in 2003 to 13% in 2008, expand assets of financial institutions by more than 30%.

### **The New Ten Projects**



### **Expected Economic Benefits**



Increase the capital value of human resource

Raise the commodity value of the environment

**Create cultural values** 

**Enrich national living** 



Promote economic growth
GDP growth up by 1.0-1.4 percentage points a year
Generate private demand
Private demand up by 0.6-0.8 percentage point a year
Increase job opportunities
Create 64,000 jobs a year
Ease deflationary pressure
CPI increase up by 0.2 percentage point
Expand tax collection
Increase tax revenue by NT\$ 70-150 billion in the coming 5 year



This summary is prepared by the Department of Economic Research of the Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD). Monthly updates can be found on the CEPD's website at <a href="http://www.cepd.gov.tw/encontent/index.jsp">http://www.cepd.gov.tw/encontent/index.jsp</a>. For inquiries call 886-2-2316-5681 or send an e-mail to chyn@cepd.gov.tw.