

## **National Development Council Press Release**

### **The Executive Yuan Has Passed the Draft Act for the Establishment of a Bilingual Nation Development Center**

Released Date: 2021 Sep. 2nd

Released by: Department of Overall Planning

To ensure a solid and steady progress of the Bilingual Nation Policy, and to further promote Taiwanese talent's competitiveness, the Executive Yuan has deliberated and passed the Draft Act for the Establishment of a Bilingual Nation Development Center today in its 3767th routine meeting. The Executive Yuan will subsequently submit the draft act for parliament deliberation. To speed up the legislative process, the National Development Council (NDC) will seek the support from political parties as well as the broader society through proactive communication.

Taiwan is a major trading nation and plays a key role in global supply chains. To make Taiwan into a pivotal force in the global economy and thereby provide its citizens with higher-quality job opportunities, the government has successively launched initiatives such as the Five Plus Two Industrial Innovation and the Six Core Strategic Industries programs. Along with efforts to optimize the investment environment, these measures have already attracted a growing number of multinational corporations and technology giants to invest in Taiwan, which is also leading to greater demand among multinational corporations for local talent with bilingual skills. At the same time, domestic firms also require large numbers of professionals who possess a wide range of expertise and skills, including English proficiency and international mobility, to adjust to

global supply chain restructuring.

To enable Taiwan's young people to gain better job opportunities and higher salaries, the government has launched the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy. Building upon Taiwan's advantages as a Mandarin-speaking nation, this policy aims to enhance young people's English communication capabilities, further their professional expertise and skills, and strengthen their global competitiveness through long-term policy implementation. The NDC and the Ministry of Education (MOE) will take lead to coordinate cross-agency resources, and drive the Bilingual Nation 2030 policy forward with the purpose to achieve the six main goals: (1) accelerating the development of bilingual higher education; (2) balancing and optimizing bilingual conditions for schools at the senior high school level and below; (3) developing digital learning; (4) expanding provision of affordable English proficiency tests; (5) raising civil servants' English proficiency; and (6) establishing an administrative body dedicated to policy promotion and implementation.

In terms of higher education, the MOE has already launched the Plan to Bilingualize Learning for Students in Institutions of Higher Education, which aims to transform internationally outstanding college/university and specialized college into beacon bilingual college/university. The beacon bilingual college/university will cultivate bilingual talent with specialized skills, and serve as a model to other institutes. In terms of bilingual policy at the senior high school level and below, under the premise of not involving adjusting implementation of the 2019 curriculum guidelines, and by means of comprehensively increasing capabilities and narrowing gaps, and through focused cultivation, the MOE will press ahead the bilingual education steadily year by year, stage by stage, to enhance students' ability to use English in daily life, promote interschool cooperation (e.g., in the UK, US and Australia), and advance digital

learning, so as to strengthen students' English proficiency holistically. In addition, bilingual teaching manpower plays a key role in our Bilingual National Policy. The MOE has accelerated the deployment of capacity building programs for all levels of school teachers to step up local teaching capacity. The MOE will also expand programs for the recruitment of foreign English teachers and teaching assistants and work on relevant planning to fill up the manpower gap.

In the present digital age, emerging digital technologies and digital learning platforms are critical tools for implementing Taiwan's Bilingual Nation policy. Digital technology enables English learning resources to be distributed throughout the nation, and particularly to be made available to schools in remote areas, thus narrowing the resource gap between regions. Digital learning can also assist schools in engaging in transnational bilingual teaching cooperation, such as interschool cooperation on teachers and curriculums, and thus enable our bilingual education to be aligned with international practices. Given the increasing internationalization of government affairs and the growing frequency of cross-border cooperation and exchanges at all levels of government, priority will be given to raising the English proficiency of civil servants who handle foreign affairs, through examinations and training. At the same time, to gradually enhance English proficiency of all personnel, civil servants will be encouraged to make use of English training courses, digital resources, and other channels to improve their English and advance their career development.

The nature of the Bilingual Policy consists of generality, continuity, public good, and expertise, which requires long-term implementation and involves many different aspects, requiring policymakers to understand the needs of numerous stakeholders. Considering all above, a Bilingual Nation Development Center will

be established in the form of an administrative body to ensure policies will be executed as designed, and long-term plans will be implemented. By injecting in the energy and creativity of the private sector, coupled with adequate monitoring and evaluating mechanisms, the Bilingual Nation Development Center will be able to see through the smooth implementation of Bilingual Nation 2030. The objective of establishing the Bilingual Nation Development Center is neither to replace the functions of existing administrative agencies nor to compete with private enterprises; instead, it will provide auxiliary support systems and enhance the quality of English education and training in existing administrative and educational systems. The Center will work with non-governmental organizations to optimize policy effectiveness, bringing stronger competitiveness and bilingual capabilities for coming generations.