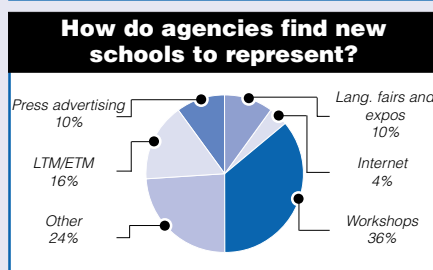
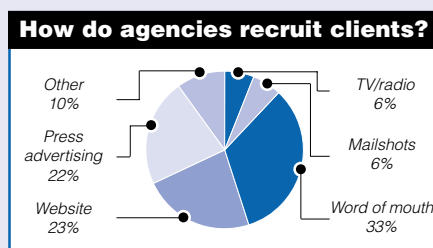
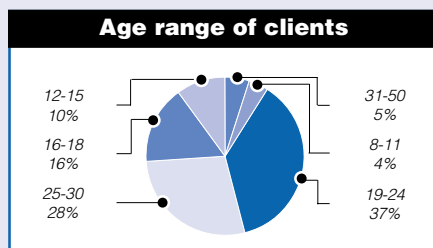
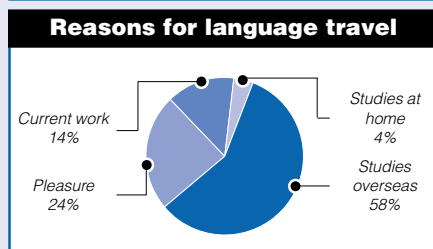
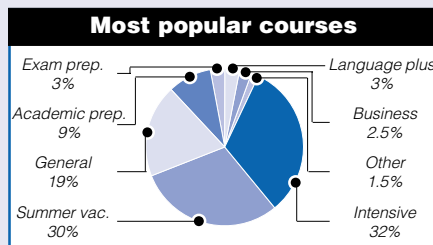
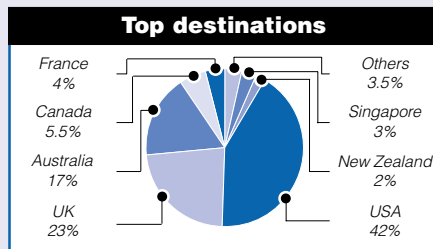


# Taiwan downturn

Economic problems have had an adverse effect on the language travel market in Taiwan, with the majority of agents reporting fewer student bookings in 2001.



## Key points

- The eight agencies that took part in our survey placed a total of 4,534 students in 2001
- Individual agencies placed between 30 and 1,700 students on language courses per year
- The average length of stay was 14.1 weeks
- 46.2 per cent of Taiwanese students ask for a quality-accredited school
- 66 per cent of Taiwanese students studied overseas between June and August
- 61 per cent of Taiwanese students stayed with host families
- US\$371 per week was an average spend for tuition and accommodation
- The average commission rate offered by language schools was 19.2 per cent
- The number of countries represented by agencies ranged from three to 11
- Taiwanese agents formed between 0 and 30 new partnerships last year

### Market growth

Overall, 88 per cent of our agent respondents reported a decrease or stagnation in student bookings in 2001, with individual agents reporting a reduction in business of between 10 and 47 per cent. Bookings were down by an average of 7.8 per cent in 2001, which reflects a further deterioration of the market since last year's Agency Survey (see *Language Travel Magazine*, July 2001, page 16), when bookings for 2000 fell by 2.8 per cent overall.

bookings from business executives just one per cent.

### Language and destination trends

English language courses were by far the most popular choice, making up 91 per cent of our agents' overall business. French courses made up a further four per cent of bookings and German and Spanish claimed one and two per cent respectively. The USA is still the most popular destination, although its popularity declined in 2001

as it accounted for only 42 per cent of the market share, compared with 58 per cent in 2000. This trend was noted by one of our respondents who said that Australia and Canada were winning market share as the USA's declined.

### Agent role

Overall, 77 per cent of our agents' clients knew which country they wanted to study in before seeking advice, while only 26 per cent knew which town or city they required and 16 per cent had an

idea about the school they wanted to go to. After consultation, our respondents estimated that a significant 77 per cent of clients changed their mind about the country, 23 per cent chose a different city and 26 per cent revised their choice of school.

### Forecast for 2002

Respondents were divided about the future, with 50 per cent of respondents expecting a small increase in business over the next year in line with the recovery of the economy. However, others predicted stagnant student bookings or a decrease in business.

### Student trends

The majority of students enrolling on language courses were in their twenties, with 65 per cent of agency business concentrated in the 19-to-30 year old age range. This age range was also reported as showing the most promise for the future by agents. June, July and August were the busiest times for students to study overseas, with a slight peak in January, February and March. Fifty-four per cent of our respondents' business was generated by individuals, while group bookings made up 45 per cent and

### Economic overview

- Last year, Taiwan's economy suffered its worst downturn in 26 years when it experienced a negative economic growth rate of two per cent and unemployment levels of nearly five per cent. The Taiwanese Ministry of Economic Affairs is predicting a return to economic growth however. The country has previously enjoyed a six per cent average annual growth rate for over 40 years.

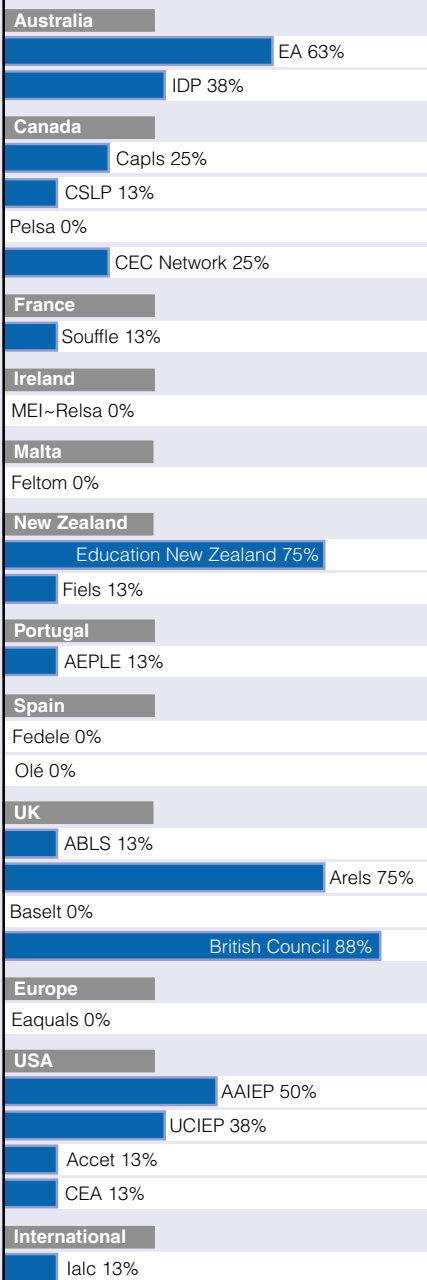
- IT-related products account for about 40 per cent of the value of Taiwan's exports and it is the global decrease in this industry that has hit the country's economy hard.

- To avoid dependency on the growing export market to China, the government is working towards deployment of a global export strategy.

- Taiwan became a member of the World Trade Organisation in September 2001 and is the world's 14th largest trading nation.

Sources: FT.com, Taiwan Institute of Economic Research

## Percentage of agents who recognised each of the following organisations



**Thank you to the following agencies for taking part in our survey:** Cambridge Language Center; Chinese Education Development & Cooperation Association; Dragon Worldwide Education Service; International Education Foundation; Merica Group; Southern Hemisphere Overseas Study Centre; United Education Service; Welcome Consulting Company

**Taiwanese agents named a range of language programmes they work with, including, in Australia:** Adelaide Institute of TAFE, Adelaide, SA; Shalston International College, Kangaroo Point, QLD; University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC; University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA. **In New Zealand:** Auckland University of Technology, Auckland. **In the USA:** University College Berkeley, Berkeley, CA; Wisconsin English Second Language Institute, Madison, WI. **In the UK:** University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh. **Worldwide:** Aspect ILA; Embassy CES; ELS Language Centers; Eurocentres; Intenexus; Language Studies International; Study Group