

New policy looks to lure Taiwan entrepreneurs

Expanding business opportunities could attract more island youth to the mainland

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Authorities recently introduced a new policy that provides more opportunities for Taiwan residents who are willing to establish businesses on the Chinese mainland.

The move is the latest effort to encourage the island's people, especially the younger generation, to find jobs or start businesses on the mainland.

The policy will help ensure that they enjoy the same treatment as mainland residents, Zhu Fenglian, a spokeswoman for the State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office, said at a news conference last month.

As of March 16, Taiwan people can register and operate individually-owned businesses in 122 sectors on the mainland, including cereal crop farming, fruit planting and beverage manufacturing. Previously, they were only allowed to run businesses in 24 sectors.

Taiwan residents may also run businesses in 27 pilot areas for the innovative development of services across the mainland, including in Beijing, Shanghai and many provincial capitals, according to a notice jointly released by the Taiwan Affairs Office, the Ministry of Commerce and the State Administration for Market Regulation.

By registering businesses in pilot areas, Taiwan residents can enjoy better career opportunities, Zhu said.

The new policy is an expansion of three others unveiled in 2007, 2011 and 2015 to encourage Taiwan residents to seek self-employment on the mainland.

By the end of last year, about 10,000 individually-owned businesses had been registered by Taiwan residents on the mainland, according to statistics from the market regulator.

The new policy has been expanded to cover more sectors, including the planting of vegetables, fruits, edible fungi and other horticultural crops, as well as the manufacturing of candy, chocolate and beverages.

Entertainment agencies, pet services, translation services and training centers for artistic activities like pottery and painting were also added.

There are many sectors in which Taiwan people have developmental advantages, and they are very interested in starting their own enterprises, Zhu said.

"The policy will provide more opportunities for Taiwan compatriots, especially people from the grassroots and young people, to find jobs, start businesses and realize their dreams," she said.

Since the policy was launched, young people from Taiwan in various provincial-level regions including Beijing, Shanghai and the provinces of Jiangsu, Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang and Hubei have consulted local authorities



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

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Zhu Fenglian, a spokeswoman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council

27 pilot areas

including Beijing, Shanghai and many provincial capitals welcome Taiwan residents to run businesses

about it, according to the Taiwan Affairs Office.

On March 18, a young Taiwan man in Kunshan, Jiangsu, obtained a license to open a business. On March 29, another young Taiwan compatriot in Wuhan, Hubei, also got a license, the office said.

After the introduction of these policies in recent years, many young people from the island have crossed the Straits to try their luck on the mainland.

At the end of 2014, Fan-Chiang Feng, from Taoyuan, Taiwan, resigned from his company on the island and came to Xiamen, Fujian, to look for entrepreneurial opportunities.

With the idea of attracting more Taiwan youths to open businesses on the mainland, he collaborated with a partner in Xiamen in 2016 to set up the Qida Straits Youths Entrepreneurial and Incubation Center in the city, which provides services for Taiwan startups on the mainland.

About 20,000 young people have come to the mainland to vis-

it, study, intern, work or start businesses through activities organized by the center. Since September, about 10,000 people from both sides of the Straits have participated in the center's online exchange activities, according to Fan-Chiang.

The 41-year-old said the new policy has lowered the threshold for Taiwan youth to start businesses on the mainland.

He added that an individual from Taiwan can apply to start a business by following simple steps, and there is no capital requirement, so the cost to enter the mainland market is low.

"Comparatively, it's quite difficult for young graduates to set up a company, because they need to consider which industry to choose, where to rent an office and related costs. There are many things to worry about," he said.

Fan-Chiang said Taiwan youths are well suited to careers in service industries, such as tea shops, pet services and entertainment agencies, which are among the

sectors added to the policy.

Many pilot areas are cultural and tourism destinations with developed service industries, including Hangzhou in Zhejiang and Suzhou in Jiangsu, he said. These cities need talent in the fields of cultural and creative design, catering and e-commerce, all of which Taiwan youth are suited to, he added.

With the new policy, they can come to the mainland first, choose a field and a mainland city, and make friends and adapt to mainland life, Fan-Chiang said.

"If their businesses are successful, they can develop them. If they find it difficult to manage, they can find a local partner or just find a job," he said.

Fan-Chiang said cooperation between Taiwan youth and their mainland counterparts is quite important to success. His team now has about 30 people, half from the island. Each project will involve a Taiwan employee and a mainland employee working together to ensure that cross-Straits activities progress well.

Policy Digest

Nursing homes urged to improve services



Local authorities should improve the ability of communities to provide integrated medical and nursing services to meet the needs of seniors, according to a notice issued by the National Health Commission and eight other departments.

The notice, released on March 25, said that institutions providing such services should strictly adhere to laws, regulations and standards to ensure safety and professionalism.

Community health service centers should improve health education, health management and chronic disease prevention and control for older people. They should also improve services provided by family doctors and offer long-term prescription and home-based medical care to eligible seniors.

Additionally, community nursing facilities for the elderly should work actively to integrate medical care into their services if possible, the notice said, encouraging local hospitals to set up their service stations at the facilities.

Community health service centers are encouraged to collaborate with the facilities to provide their elderly residents with basic public health services. They should also sign contracts with the facilities and offer the seniors other medical services.

Furthermore, the notice said they should make better use of the internet in their efforts to integrate medical and nursing services.

It suggested local authorities work on creating smarter systems for home-based medical and nursing services and enable hospitals, community health service centers and nursing facilities to share medical and nursing records to improve the efficiency and quality of the services.

At the same time, the institutions are asked to strictly follow rules on internet security and health data confidentiality to protect patients.

NHC plan targets health of women and children

The National Health Commission issued a plan earlier this month to implement the State Council's plans for the development of women and children through 2030.

National health services for women and children are facing multiple challenges, from unbalanced development and inadequate and unevenly distributed resources, to a shortage of high-quality services, the commission stated.

Adding to the challenge, women of advanced maternal age and those who have given birth at least twice account for a larger proportion of pregnant women since national birth policies were readjusted, increasing the risk of complications and birth defects.

According to the plan, the national maternal mortality rate should decline to 12 deaths per 100,000 live births, and the neonatal mortality rate should drop to less than three deaths per 1,000 live births by 2030.

The plan tasked local health authorities with reducing the mortality rates of infants and children under 5.

It also called for narrowing the mortality rate gap between regions — particularly urban and rural areas — and for more pre-marital, preconception and prenatal medical tests to prevent disease among newborn babies.

The plan further stated that the rate of newborns undergoing screening tests for genetic metabolic disorders and hearing loss should be increased, and the rate of HIV mother-to-child transmissions should be reduced to less than 2 percent.

WANG QINGYUN

Measure could boost confidence among compatriots in Kunshan

By ZHANG YI

Chen Yu-chieh, a Taiwan compatriot in his 20s, obtained a license to open a paper manufacturing business in Kunshan, Jiangsu province, last month.

After submitting relevant paperwork, including his residential permit and proof of business address at the local administrative examination and approval bureau, he received his license in about 15 minutes.

Central government authorities issued a new policy on March 16 concerning applications by Taiwan

residents to establish businesses on the mainland. Two days later, Chen became the first in Jiangsu to obtain a license under the policy.

Taiwan residents are now allowed to open businesses in 122 sectors on the mainland, compared to 24 before. Paper manufacturing is among those included.

"I wanted to try my hand at the paper manufacturing business. When the policy came out, I looked at the list of industries and found it was included. I immediately went to apply for a license," he said.

"It's convenient," he said of the policy, adding that it has strengthened

Taiwan people's desire to start businesses not only in Kunshan, but across the mainland.

Sun Teh-tsong, president of the Kunshan Association of Taiwan Compatriots Investment Enterprises, said the new policy provides more entrepreneurship opportunities for people from the island, especially people at the grassroots-level and the youth.

As a result of the policies, there will be more frequent exchanges between Kunshan and Taiwan, he said.

Zhao Shu, director of Kunshan's Taiwan Affairs Office, said, "Starting

businesses or being employed is the best way for young people from Taiwan to get to know, understand and take root in the mainland."

Kunshan will continue to improve its services and create convenient conditions for Taiwan compatriots who study, work or start businesses in the city, she said.

A county-level city in southeastern Jiangsu bordered by Shanghai in the east and Suzhou, Jiangsu province, in the west, Kunshan has enjoyed active investment from Taiwan entrepreneurs.

Taiwan-funded enterprises account for about 30 percent of Kun-

shan's regional GDP, 50 percent of its industrial output and 70 percent of its total import and export volume, data from the office showed.

There are about 100,000 Taiwan compatriots in Kunshan, with people between 18 and 45 accounting for roughly 40 percent of that group, and the number is on the rise, according to the office.

To help boost their careers on the mainland, Kunshan has launched a channel for Taiwan talent to apply for professional title evaluation on the mainland. So far, 37 have obtained professional titles in the city, it said.