



Taipei 20+

The Map of the City of
Gender Diversity & Inclusion

Founded "Taipei City Committee of Women's Rights Promotion"



Founded the first national committee under a public-private partnership to promote women's participation in public affairs in Taiwan. The name was later changed to "Taipei City Committee for Promotion of Female Rights."

Passed the "Regulations for Prevention of Workplace Sexual Harassment"

This was the country's first legal provision to regulate workplace sexual harassment among private businesses.

Founded "Taipei City Taskforce for Prevention of Domestic Violence"

Established a network to prevent domestic violence through the collaboration between the public and private sectors. A women protection center and a 24-hour hotline were also set up.

Passed a gender quota article for Taipei City Committee of Women's Rights Promotion



This article stipulated that female representatives should account for no less than 1/2 of the total committee members. In 2002, the amended article stated that the quota of externally recruited committee members of a single gender shall not be lower than 1/4. The article was amended in 2020 again so that the proportion of committee members of any single gender should be no less than 1/3.

Enacted the "Effort to Relieve Victims of Sexual Assault from Repeated Statements"

Taipei was the first in the country to enact such effort and established a one-stop service model centered on compassionate assistance for victims.

Formed "Taipei City Taskforce for Assistance and Consultation for New Immigrants"

"New immigrant" was subsequently confirmed as the official term to refer to individuals of a foreign or Chinese nationality married to a Taiwanese citizen. In addition, social assistance programs such as teacher training and occupation training for new immigrants were introduced.

Announced "Taipei City's Implementation Plan for Creating an LGBT-Friendly Environment"



This article mandated that all government agencies implement various LGBT-friendly measures. Subsequently, the "LGBT Community Affairs Coordination Meeting" was established, for which non-governmental LGBT and gender equality organizations

Set up a "Office for Gender Equality, Taipei City Government"



This was the first local government agency set up to be responsible for the planning and monitoring of gender equality policies.

Created a "Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women" (CEDAW) which comprehensively reviews local regulations.

Following the establishment of CEDAW, the city ensured that all local regulations were compatible with the principle of gender equality and set up a review system for every four years.

Joined "Cities for CEDAW Campaign"

Taipei was the first non-US city that joined the agreement, declaring its determination to build an all-inclusive gender-friendly city.



Launched the "Reward Project for Gender Mainstreaming"



All agencies were evaluated for the outcomes of their gender equality measures. Awards were given to agencies and special events with an outstanding score. The award has since been given out every two years.

Stipulated "Taipei City's Guidelines for Installation of All Gender Restrooms within Government Agencies"



This provided a clear standard for the installation of all gender restrooms, encouraging local government agencies to create a friendly environment for sexual minorities.



Founded "Taipei City Center for Prevention of Sexual Assault"

Set up a designated government agency responsible for issues related to sexual assault. It later integrated with the 24-hour protection center to become the "Taipei City Center for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault."



Organized the first "Taipei LGBT Right Festival"

This was the first promotional event for LGBT equal rights sponsored by government budgets. It continues to take place annually.

Dispatched representatives to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and NGO-CSW



Taipei was the first local government to send representatives to the event every year and has subsequently organized a parallel event to share Taipei City's experiences.

Introduced the project of gender mainstreaming

This article stipulated that all government agencies in Taipei City should propose a work plan for gender equality and following that, first-level agencies were required to establish a taskforce for gender equality.

Timeline The Path to Gender Equality in Taipei

Announced the "Campaign to Promote Male Participation and Gender Equality – Encouraging Males to Be Involved in Diverse Fatherhood Roles"



Since 2010, the city has encouraged males to participate in family care, comprehensively implementing the idea into relevant policies and projects of all government agencies.

Launched the registration system for same-sex partnership

This act pioneered LGBT-friendly measures including mass weddings, medical benefits, and equal rights for city government employees.

Petitioned for a constitutional interpretation on same-sex marriage



As the competent local authority, Taipei City Government petitioned the Grand Justices for a constitutional interpretation on the prohibition of same-sex marriage in the Civil Code.

Allowed same-sex couples to apply for social housing



"Taipei City's criteria for Social Housing Rentals" was amended, including same-sex couples as eligible applicants. The new methods were implemented the next year.

Stipulated measures for prevention of sexual harassment and sexual assault during the 2017 Universiade

The city adopted trailblazing interventions to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault, as well as designed prevention and grievance measures. They have since become a reference for other industries, such as sporting events.

Launched an informational website and consultation hotline for LGBT people.



Taipei was the first to launch a Q&A website collecting information related to same-sex marriage registration and rights, as well as to set up the Consultation Hotline for further assistance.

Implemented protection measures for victims of non-consensual pornography

Taipei was the first to provide guidance for handling relevant cases, and for setting up safety reminders. In addition, the Department of Social Welfare provided victims with services of consultation and shelter.



Taipei Gender Equality 20+

How can gender equality be transformed from a slogan to a value implemented in daily life? It is through small steps and the mobilization of everyone, including the painstaking collaboration between the government and the private sector.

In this chapter, we present the important reform measures for gender equality carried out and co-sponsored by the Taipei City Government for the past decades. The three sections are: "Gender-Friendly Landmarks," "Taipei No.1," and "Restructure is the Beginning of Equality," providing you a comprehensive introduction crossing different perspectives and fields.

Gender-friendly Landmarks

How do you feel when walking in the city?

Landmarks preserve the history of each era and the stories of the residents.

This section is a guide for your visit to the city! Combining the scenic sights of the city, it explores how landscapes and landmarks present images and stories of extraordinary women and sexual minorities in different times.



1 Taipei Women's Center

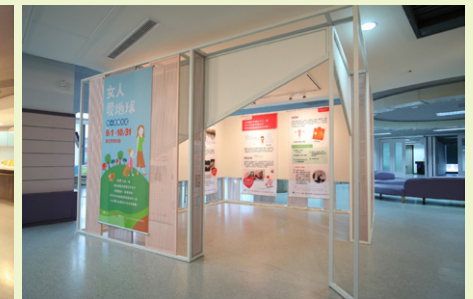
Address: 3F, No. 101, Bangka Boulevard, Wanhua District, Taipei City

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 09:00–21:00, Sunday 09:00–18:00

*Closed every Monday and on national holidays

Wanhua is a district in Taipei with a long history of development and culture. Women have always played a silent yet lively role in the city, an existence indispensable to the city. In 2016, the Department of Social Welfare entrusted the Taipei Young Women's Christian Association with planning the Women's Center in Taiwan. They designed the entrance with a green wall, representing a natural setting.

Taipei Women's Center focuses on local neighborhoods with a lens towards the entire world, by providing services that empower women and are based on the vision of gender equality. The Center organizes exhibitions that tell stories about rural and metropolitan women, as well as designs diverse events including handicrafts, cooking, exercise activities and other workshops. Its goals are not only to flip the stereotypes about women under conventional gender roles, but also to lead more women to take a break and turn their focuses inward to fortify themselves.



2

Men's Talk — Taipei Men's Center

Address: 3F, No. 5, Lane 199, Dunhua North Road, Songshan District, Taipei City

Opening hours: Tuesday and Saturday 10:00-18:00, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10:00-21:00

*Closed every Sunday, Monday and on national holidays

"Boys don't cry" is a misconception about masculinity, and as ideas about gender equality evolve, men are slowly liberated from such conventional roles and images. In 2016, the Department of Social Welfare entrusted the "Teacher Chang Foundation, a group of professional counselors," with the operation of the "Center for Male Growth and Family Services," later renamed the "Men's Talk Station." The goal is to offer men services that help them no longer be limited by rigid stereotypes, as well as embrace their soft, vulnerable and emotional side.

The goal of the Men's Talk Station is to "Help men stop feeling lonely and helpless." The Men's Talk Station organizes activities such as couple counseling, empowerment groups for new fathers, parent-child handcraft classes, and even work-out sessions. The second major goal is to offer services to male victims of intimate partner violence. Due to conventional gender stereotypes, many men are hesitant about seeking help when encountering physical or psychological violence in an intimate relationship. Men's Talk Station helps these men understand their victimization and provides psychological support and recovery so that they can improve their living circumstances.



3

New Immigrants' Hall in Taipei City

1, 3, 4F, No. 171, Changsha Road Sec. 2, Wanhua District, Taipei City

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 09:00 – 17:00

No. 75, Dadong Road, Shilin District, Taipei City

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday 09:00–12:00, 14:00–17:00

Up to 2020, 88.6% of the 36,000 new immigrants registered in Taipei City are women, with the majority from southeastern Asia and China. New immigrants often faced pressure alone due to differences in language, culture, and daily habits. In 2005, the Department of Civil Affairs of Taipei City opened the New Immigrants' Hall in Wanhua District, a district with the highest number of new immigrants. The New Immigrants' Hall provides a place to gather and socialize, helping combat the epidemic of loneliness. In 2006, a branch which was opened in Nangang District later moved to Shilin District due to concerns about the lack of seismic resistance in the original building.

The New Immigrants' Hall organizes events like cooking and dance classes. In November 2014, the Wanhua Branch was refurbished and set up a Karaoke machine station, a dance rehearsal room, and a computer lab. As the first agency in the country to provide translation service in English, Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Thai, the Wanhua Branch continues to advocate for an immigrant-friendly society. Home visits are also conducted to engage families and friends of new immigrants.

Source: New Immigrants Area Taipei City, Taipei City New-Immigrant Census October 2020, see: <https://nite.taipei/News.aspx?n=9D6F9A70A5C3D434&sms=A2D05DEA4831BB21>



4

Tsai Jui-yueh Dance Research Studio

Address: No.10, Lane 48, Zhongshan North Road Sec. 2, Zhongshan District, Taipei City

Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday 10:00 – 17:00

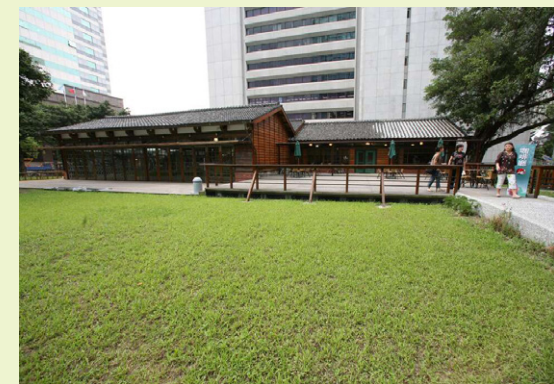
*Closed every Monday

Born in 1921, Tsai Jui-yueh studied modern dance after graduating from junior high school and became a favorite student of the Japanese national treasure, Ishii Midori. However her life was shaped by an uncertain time. Tsai's husband Lei Shi-yu was charged with espionage and sent into exile in 1949, and she was implicated as an accomplice and served three years in Lyudao Prison. After being released, Tsai, who did not succumb to the surveillance of intelligence agencies and the authority's control, founded the "Chinese Dance Studio" on Zhongshan North Road. She devoted herself to teaching and modern dance choreography, as well as to using soft physical metaphors as a protest against the authoritarian government.



In 1994, the dance studio faced threats of demolition and relocation, and support flowed in from many other artists. Dancers from Cloud Gate Dance Theater, Formosa Indigenous Dance Foundation, and the Taipei Dance Circle gave a 24-hour-long relay performance, while other dancers protested by hooking themselves to a high point. These actions showed Tsai's willingness to sacrifice her own body to fight against the oppressing power and successfully stop the demolition.

In 1999, the dance studio was declared a historic site by the city but unfortunately suffered loss from a fire. The restoration was completed in 2003, and Tsai Jui-yueh Dance Foundation was entrusted by the Department of Cultural Affairs to manage the site. Since then the foundation has continued to offer dance classes and organize performances at the studio, allowing the public to visit. It is an important historic site of cultural significance that tells the history of the "White Terror." It is also a cultural landmark in memory of women's life-long dance.



5

The Rainbow Gate at 228 Peace Memorial Park

Address: NTU Hospital MRT Station Opening hours: Always open

"In this kingdom of ours, there are no distinctions of social rank, eminence, age, or strength. What we share in common are bodies filled with aching, irrepressible desire and hearts filled with insane loneliness."

Forty years ago, author Pai Hsien-yung' novel "Crystal Boys," portrayed the joy, sorrow, and the vicissitudes of life of gay men in the 1960s, as well as presented this nightly kingdom of Taipei to the world. The novel was set in Taipei New Park, now named 228 Peace Memorial Park.

In 2016, under a collaboration of the Department of Public Works, the Parks and Street Lights Office, the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Department of Information and Tourism, Taiwan Tongzhi Hotline Association, and the Taiwan Alliance to Promote Civil Partnership Rights, 228 Peace Memorial Park was transformed into a "rainbow landmark," using a six-color rainbow to symbolize LGBT equal rights. The landmark presents the relationship between park space and LGBT history in the hope that the flowers of gender equality would bloom freely.

Source: Taipei City Government, *Taipei*, No. 589



This rainbow landmark is designed based on the concept of simple urban aesthetics, which paints the metal structure with soft colors and combines six plants with individual distinct colors to create an image of a six-color rainbow. The red Ruby Leaf represents sex and love, the orange King Ixora strength, the yellow Gold Sun hope, the green Lily-Turf nature, the blue Britton Ruellia freedom, and the purple Lantana art. With the design, it is hoped that human rights can continue to strive just like the beautiful plants.

The rainbow gate represents the hope for LGBT equal rights. Even though same-sex marriage has been legalized, its historical significance shall not be forgotten. This rainbow landmark is not only important for the LGBT community, but also embodies the vision for an inclusive and equal society that embraces all diversified groups.

6

The Red House

Address: No 10, Chengdu Road, Wanhua District Taipei City

Open hours:

Square: Always open

Bagua Hall: Sunday – Thursday 11:00 – 21:00, Friday and Saturday 11:00 – 22:00 *Closed every Monday

Cruciform Building: Tuesday – Thursday 14:00–21:30, Friday 14:00–22:00, Saturday 11:00–22:00, Sunday 11:00–21:30

*Closed every Monday

Constructed during the Japanese colonization, the Red House, is a must-visit site in Taipei for LGBT tourists from all around the world. The building was once saved from a threatening fire, and served as a public market, theater and cinema.

In the 1980s, the Red House Theater served as the first LGBT cinema in Taiwan. Showing dollar and C-rated movies, the Red House became a secret meeting spot for Taiwanese LGBT and guests appreciated that they never cleared out visitors after each screening. It was a haven in the still conservative society. In a fire in 2000, the entire Ximen Market surrounding the cinema was destroyed, leaving only the Red House.

Once deserted, the Red House was resurrected in 2002 thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Department of Cultural Affairs and the Paper Windmill Foundation. However, the surrounding shops still suffered from poor business, until “Bear Valley,” moved in, the first bar to target LGBT customers. Following this, more bars opened for business on the southern square of the Red House. As rainbow flags gradually start to wave in the open air, it also symbolizes the journey of the LGBT community from underground to the sunshine.

Today, the southern square of the Red House has become the most famous LGBT landmark in Taipei City. Around the annual Taipei LGBT Pride and New Year’s Eve, outdoor parties are organized with drag queens and diverse crowds showing their true colors. Here, a special atmosphere with open-air bars is created, representing the unique LGBT culture in Taipei, and making the Red House a must-visit site for all foreign tourists.



Rainbow Six of Ximending

Address: Outside of Exit 6 of Ximen MRT Station

Opening hours: Always open

Ximending has become an important site for the social life of the community because of its proximity to the 228 Peace Memorial Park, an early-time gathering spot for the LGBT community, and to the Red House, where many LGBT bars are located. The area is also often included in the route of Taiwan LGBT pride, and a favorable venue for the after parties because of its unique significance in the history of LGBT movement in Taiwan.

The pioneering same-sex marriage law was passed in Taiwan on May 17th, 2019, making Taiwan the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage. To prepare for Pride on October 26th that year, civil organizations, the city government and council representatives painted a six-color rainbow on the street just outside of Exit 6 of Ximen MRT Station on September 25th. This commemorated the first post-marriage campaign Pride and became a great symbol of importance for the LGBT community, appearing "Taipei" is painted in white on this rainbow crosswalk. While advertising for Taiwan LGBT Pride, this landmark is named "Rainbow Six," representing the efforts of Taipei City Government into promoting gender equality, inclusion and respect for human rights. This new rainbow landmark has become a popular site in Taipei city, attracting many local and international tourists.



As the capital city in Taiwan, Taipei also plays a leading role on different gender equality policies.

In this section, we introduce the measures the Taipei City Government has taken before any other city, county or even the central government. We also share how these policies have evolved and their extensive impact on the gender friendliness of the city.

Taipei NO.1

1

Introducing all gender restrooms, realizing equality in toilet use

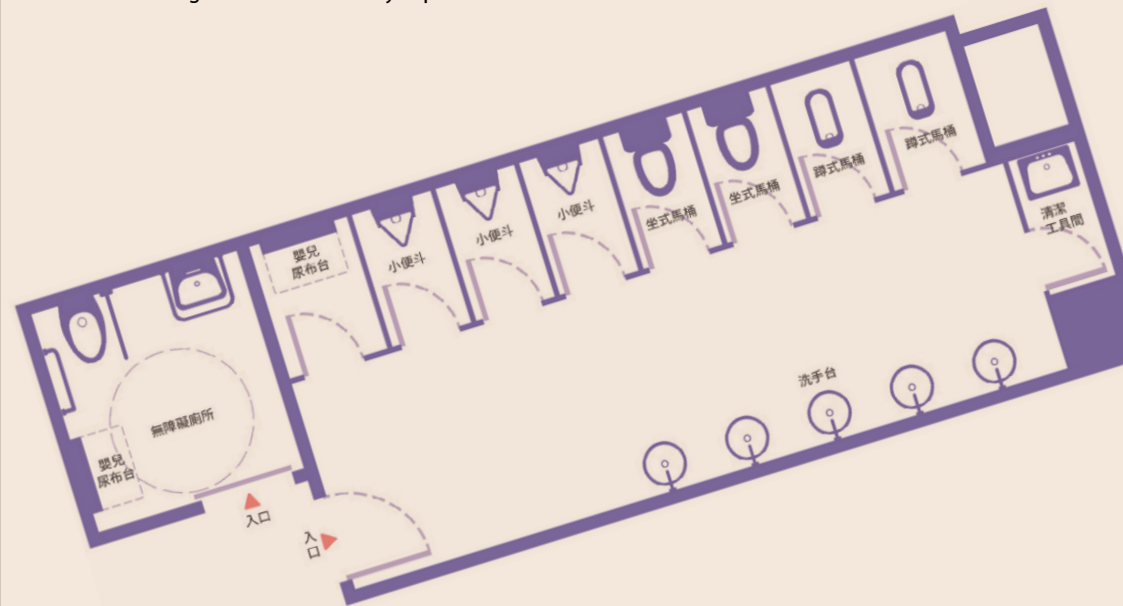
Using a toilet is one of the most basic functions in one's life, as well as an aspect that reflects one's gender identity most straightforwardly. To advocate for a diverse and inclusive world today, providing a safe and comfortable experience of toilet use for all individuals with different gender expressions and identities is the embodiment of respect and equality.

There is a history to the emergence of all gender restrooms. In 1996 the Taipei City Committee of Women's Rights Promotion proposed a "public restroom inspection," attempting to solve problems such as sanitary standards, insufficient female restrooms and safety concerns. Over time, the need grew for family-friendly and wheelchair accessible restrooms for all genders. This gave birth to the "Guidelines for Installation of All Gender Restrooms," which was published by the Office for Gender Equality in 2018. In 2020, the Department of Urban Development integrated considerations about male-female ratio of toilets, family-friendly



environments, accessibility and unisex design into its framework for installing and remodeling public restrooms, in the hope of achieving the goal of "equality for all".

Cases of the city government installing all gender restrooms date back to 2013, when the Department of Civil Affairs urged the Household Registration Office in Zhongzheng District to remodel its public restrooms. In 2016, the Department of Education launched a pilot project on restroom design, a project that also attempted to solve the problem of insufficient female toilets. In 2018, the Red House in Ximending and Songshan Cultural and Creative Park started their construction on public restrooms, for which the height of partitions was increased for better privacy, creating a more satisfactory experience of toilet use.



2

Launching the first “LGBT Community Affairs Coordination Meeting,” creating a public-private partnership platform

In the past, LGBT people lived in this city as if they were invisible, with their daily needs rarely seen, valued and taken care of by the government.

The Department of Civil Affairs launched its first LGBT Civil Right Festival in 2000, and has been organizing the groundbreaking cross-agency “LGBT Community Affairs Coordination Meeting” since 2011, with the attempt to create a LGBT-friendly and gender-diverse environment. The meeting discusses various LGBT-related affairs, including gender equity education, friendly medical care, and training for civil servants, for which non-governmental organizations involved in LGBT rights and gender equality are also invited to join. The meeting is convened three times a year, serving as an important platform for public-private collaboration.

Prior to the legalization of same-sex marriage, many policies of Taipei City Government that were more progressive than the central government’s stance came from this coordination meeting. They included launching a registration system for same-sex couples, including same-sex couples in the city’s mass wedding. This allowed same-sex couples to apply for social housing, and grant LGBT employees of the city government family care leave, bereavement leave, marital leave and paternity leave.

The coordination meeting does not only show that the city government has “seen” LGBT’s needs, but that various government agencies are devoted to a friendly environment. Moreover, it is an institutionalized platform for the social sector to be able to communicate with the government directly and regularly, and for the two parties to join forces in the creation of a friendly city.



3

Welcoming same-sex couples to the city’s mass wedding

“This same sex couple met in 2007 and married in Canada in 2012, have long deemed each other as their life-long partner throughout this entire journey. They wish their marriage to be recognized and to face no more obstacles.”

“The marriage equality movement is the starting point of their story. As these two persons become partners, they have also joined each other’s family. Their desire to be blessed has solidified their affection for each other.”

—These are stories about same-sex couples told by the moderator at Taipei City’s mass wedding.

On October 24th, 2015, before same-sex marriage was legalized in Taiwan, the Taipei City Government took the first initiative in inviting same-sex couples to sign up for its mass wedding, which has been hosted by the city for 42 years. For the first year, 10 same-sex couples joined 113 heterosexual spouses for the celebration.

Ko Wen-je, the Mayor at the time, attended as the chief witness of the wedding. He pointed out that all citizens were family, and wished that every person could live a happy life and that all loving couples could be together. Lan Shih-tung, Commissioner of the Department of Civil Affairs, said that marriage was an inherent right and Taipei City Government supported all diverse families of a non-conventional form.



4

Integrating issues related to gender equality into pre-school education

"Barbies are toys for girls." "Boys should wear blue and girls pink." "It's so strange that male teachers do the dishes." These statements from children demonstrate that young children are already able to identify many gender stereotypes in their daily lives. This suggests that gender equity education should be taught throughout one's entire life, and not just during a specific period.

Exploring one's surrounding as a baby and a young child is a critical enlightenment for our understanding of the world. In view of the fact that the Gender Equity Education Act does not apply to pre-school education, since 2015 the Taipei City Government has created a series of gender equity education contents to be applied to young children from the age of zero on. For example, training for childcare providers for children between the age of zero and two includes an additional two hours of gender equity curriculum. The Gender Equity Education Resource Center for Kindergartens has developed a range of key points about gender equity education for children between three and six. In addition, the Center has developed toys and equipment such as board games about gender equality, in order to achieve the goal of integrative education.



5

Integrating gender equality into environmental education, making learning entertaining

Can we learn about gender equality from nature? The Geotechnical Engineering Office of the Department of Public Works did it through its regular environmental education! During a class at Neishuangxi Nature Park, children were taught that among goby fish, females are responsible for laying eggs while males protecting them, so that female gobies can rest properly after giving birth. For birds like the Taiwan Blue Magpie, the Crested Serpent-Eagle, and the Black Drongo, other family members also share the responsibility of taking care of baby birds. This demonstrated the English idiom that "it takes a village to raise a child." Children were so impressed by the lesson that they even wrote down, "It is so cool when daddy birds hatch eggs!"

The Geotechnical Engineering Office also invited the country's first female tree worker climber specialist, Hsu Ren-han, as the instructor for its tree-climbing class during a camping trip to Bishan in Nei-hu. Tree worker climber specialists diagnose and treat disease in trees, and few women work in this role due to the physical demands. By learning from nature and shattering stereotypes, girls can also choose an occupation to their liking without being confined by tradition.

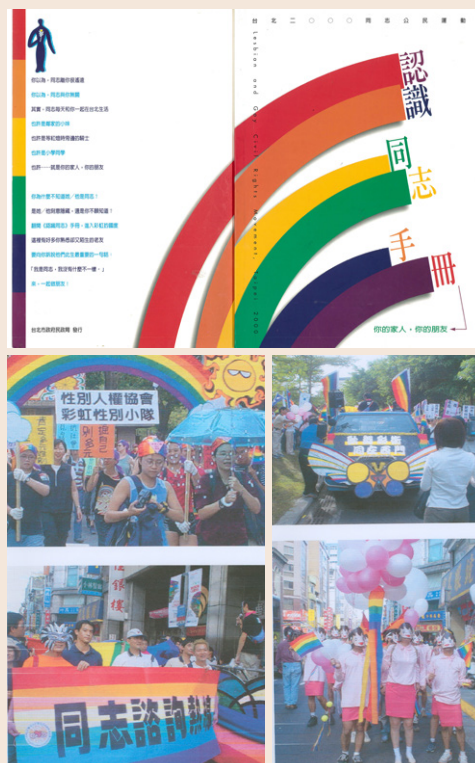
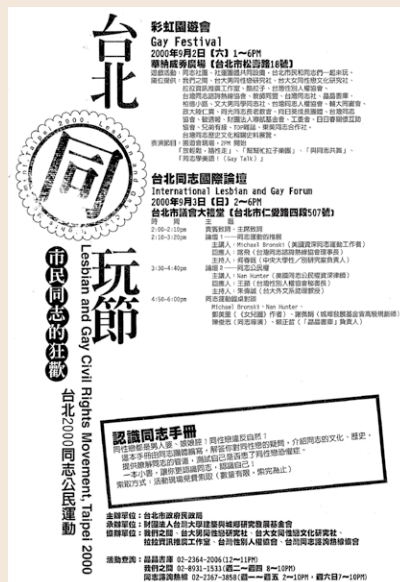


6

With the first-ever government sponsorship, helping citizens learn about LGBT people through the LGBT Civil Rights Festival

Since 2000, the Department of Civil Affairs has been organizing the LGBT Civil Rights Festival every year. It was the first event sponsored by government budgets to promote LGBT equal rights. The festival is celebrated by the LGBT citizens of Taipei and even the entire country through this 20-year-long history. The event is of great significance.

The then Taipei City Mayor, Ma Ying-ju, attended the opening ceremony of the first



LGBT Civil Right Festival and served as the rainbow ambassador, making him the first local government leader to attend an LGBT event. The well-known "Getting to Know LGBT" pamphlet was first published by the city government, and has been revised every year for public outreach. It has served as an important cornerstone for LGBT human rights education.

With the efforts of the Department of Civil Affairs as well as the LGBT and gender organizations, the LGBT Civil Rights Festival has grown into different formats, including workshops for learning about LGBT people, an LGBT film festival, a family day carnival, a selection of LGBT idols, and exhibitions on various issues. These events have enabled citizens to learn about the LGBT community from different perspectives and angles, as well as eliminated discrimination and misunderstandings about sexual minorities.

On May 24th, 2019, the first day after same-sex marriage was legalized, an outdoor LGBT mass wedding was organized, attracting hundreds of international media platforms to cover the event. Many countries' diplomatic representatives also joined the celebration, marking a historical moment for Taipei City. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was organized in an online format.



Petitioning for a constitutional interpretation, safeguarding freedom and equality on the journey to marriage equality

LGBT activist, Chi Chia-wei, and his partner applied to register their marital status at the local household registration office in March 2013, but their application was denied on the basis that the "Civil Code stipulates marriage is a union between 'a man and a woman.'" Following this they appealed to the Ministry of the Interior and filed an administrative litigation. The Supreme Administrative Court rejected Chi's appeal in 2014. In 2015, Chi petitioned for a constitutional interpretation on same-sex marriage, claiming that the articles in Chapter Two "Marriage", Part Four "Family" of the Civil Code were unconstitutional for "prohibiting two individuals of the same sex from forming a legal marital union."

In the same year, as the competent authority, the Department of Civil Affairs, questioned whether the Civil Code regulations had compromised citizens' right to freedom and equality based on the belief in "open government, public participation." They also petitioned the Grand Justices for an interpretation.



In 2017, the Judicial Yuan combined the two cases and convened a constitutional court to debate on this issue. On May 24th that year, the Grand Justices announced Interpretation No. 748, in which they declared the articles in the Civil Code that prohibited same-sex marriage to be unconstitutional and demanded competent authorities to amend associated legal provisions within two years. According to the Grand Justices, if necessary amendments were not completed within two years, same-sex couples wishing to be married shall be entitled to register their marital union based on existing laws.

After the same-sex marriage special law was passed on May 17th, 2019, the Department of Civil Affairs hosted an outdoor joint same-sex wedding party with the theme "Starting Line for Happiness – An Event in Memory of Interpretation No. 748" on Xinyi Square on May 24th. A total of 20 same-sex newlyweds tied the knots with love in this city, and the event wished to help the public to learn about same-sex marriage, and to further understand different types of happiness.



Equal pay for equal labor, promoting workplace gender equality

Married women's labor force participation rate in Taiwan has historically been low. According to the 2015 "Woman's Marriage, Fertility and Employment Survey in Taipei City", 74.01% of married women between the age of fifteen and sixty-four left their job because of "preparing for pregnancy," while 66.33% because of "caring for children." These statistics show the difficult situation working women face. In order to achieve gender equality, the Department of Labor launched a workplace evaluation project in 2002, when the Act of Equality between Males and Females in Employment was enacted (it was later renamed the Act of Gender Equality in Employment in 2008). The inspection particularly focused on the elimination of workplace sexual harassment and setting up childcare facilities. More evaluation criteria have been gradually included since then, and the evaluations are conducted every year. In 2017, Taipei City was the first in the country to organize an "equal-pay" day, calling on the central government and private businesses to give weight to the gender pay gap and to improve pay transparency on the employment market. The Department of Labor also promoted the policy, consulted employers, conducted direct inspections, and processed grievance cases.

In addition to women's rights in the workplace, in 2018 the Taipei City Government announced the "Indicators for Workplace Gender Equality". "+1 Indicators" have been added in 2020, including mechanisms to promote gender equality, improving gender equality in organizational decision-making, advancing pay equality, fostering gender equality training, balance between work and family, fertility-friendly measures, measures to improve workplace safety and gender equality, and other specific measures to promote gender equality (related to LGBT and sexual minorities), resulting in a total of "7+1" objectives. From individuals to families, gender equality is to be implemented in every aspect of a workplace.



Source: Taipei City, Woman's Marriage, Fertility and Employment Survey in Taipei City, 2015

Restructure is the Beginning of Equality

Gender equality movement is never about division and opposition, but about reaching gender equality through changing organization and system and by seeing each other's difficulties and needs.

In this section, we share about events, incidents and actions that have managed to "reverse" the traditional gender stereotypes and meanings, presenting another possibility to practice gender equality.



1

Taipei Confucius Temple welcomes female musicians and deacons for ceremonies

The goal of gender equality cannot be reached in one step. To develop gender-equal worshipping rites, it has taken more than 30 years of efforts of the Department of Civil Affairs.

Conventional stereotypes deemed women physically weaker, plus menstruation was seen as a symbol of "impurity;" therefore, only men were allowed to serve at a worshipping ceremony. In 1984 against all opposing opinions, the Taipei Confucius Temple included female personnel in its Shadian Ceremony for the first time. Starting from 1991, as a response to educational policies, female musicians have been recruited. Dancers of diverse identities have also been sought out since 1993.

In recent years, the discussion reemerged again whether ceremony deacons should include women as well. Despite some opposing opinions and conflicts, female deacons were finally recruited for the first time in 2017. In the following three years, the number of female personnel has gradually increased, reversing the old impression that women were not able to shoulder the responsibility of a worshipping ceremony.

The effort of Taipei Confucius Temple has a groundbreaking cultural impact on worship. It is not only promoted among other private organizations, but through visitors like the Gokbu Gong clan from Korea who contributed to discussions and exchanges about gender equality in Confucius' worshipping culture.



2

Ceremony Personnel at Taipei Hakka Yimin Festival breaks gender stereotypes about attendance in traditional worshipping ceremonies

Gender stereotypes about men's supremacy and women's subordination existing in traditional worshipping rites can be found in many cultural events, and Hakka's folk festival was no exception. However, taking on the responsibility of integrating modern spirits into traditions, the Hakka Affairs Council included a female group to carry the sedan chair for the first time at the Hakka Yimin Festival in 2014. This broke a previous tradition that only men could serve at worshipping ceremonies.

At the 2015 Hakka Yimin Festival, an outstanding Hakka female representative was selected to serve as the "Principle Consecration Officer" of the main ceremony. After Yiminye's (the martyr) patrol, a female principle sacrifice officer was in charge of the "seating ceremony," a rare occurrence. The deacons serving at the seating ceremony were not limited to elderly males, either, but included both young men and women, symbolizing the connection between modern Hakka culture and gender equality.



3

Advocating gender-equal funeral arrangements, campaigning for funerals with a modern spirit

Confined by a conventional patriarchal culture in which men possess a privileged and dominant position, Taiwanese funeral arrangements often make it difficult for family members to return to the “humane side” to seek comfort. These arrangements often fail to be compatible with the modern trends of religious diversity and gender equality. In view of this, the Taipei Mortuary Services Office started to advocate for gender-equal funeral arrangements, in the hope of overturning the distant, old-fashioned norms.

Can females “hold the ‘dou’ (a bamboo dipper used to measure rice)¹?” In the past, when a deceased person had no son, this task had to be taken over by a nephew. Meanwhile, the tradition that only sons and grandsons rather than women might be listed first in an obituary has caused many women life-long regrets when arranging funerals for their closest family members. Furthermore, the development of marriage equality has made it as important to respect the sexual orientation and wishes of the deceased. One agenda item is to respect the partner named by the deceased.

The Taipei Mortuary Services Office wishes to promote funerals compatible with modern spirituality in the religiously diverse Taiwan. It has devoted itself to respecting different cultural, religious and gender groups equally and to achieve the goal of “equality, respect and satisfaction.”



¹A dou is a dipper-shaped container made of bamboo that was used in the past for measuring rice. According to Taiwanese traditions, when a coffin is brought to the cemetery, a male family member (usually the eldest son or grandson) should hold a dou at the front of the funeral procession.

4

City-sponsoring sports teams to encourage women to join competitive sports

When talking about competitive sports with female participation, many immediately think sports that emphasize a “feminine” image such as gymnastics, water ballet, and ice-skating. When women take part in a sport that involves a high level of physical strength and aggressiveness, such as basketball, soccer, weight-lifting and shot-put, they often receive labels based on gender biases like “not feminine enough” or “dykes.” These comments are not only obstacles that hinder women from joining competitive sports, but also create barriers to present women’s contributions to these sports.

In order to encourage women to choose sport activities freely and to challenge the public’s gender stereotypes about competitive sports, the Department of Sports started city-sponsoring sports teams in 2019, in the hope of increasing the number of women who participate in competitive sports. The Taipei Bravo! Women’s Football Team and the Taipei King Whale Women’s Volleyball Team are two teams that Taipei City Government has endorsed and sponsored. The hope is that through this sponsorship, more women can join sports teams and make Taipei a great city of sports for all citizens regardless of gender.



5

Girls STEM camp encourages female students to join fields of STEM

Women have devoted themselves to scientific fields for a long time, but even today male perspectives dominate scientific narratives and women's participation is stifled by the traditional gender structure. In Taiwan, girls in school are often not encouraged to study science. Even when they do choose relevant disciplines, their opportunities to continue research are often oppressed by considerations like marriage, children and family care.

The Department of Education started organizing female science camps in 2001, inviting female tech-icons and scientists to share their experiences in studying and researching, as well as to encourage female middle-school students to break gender boundaries. In 2015, the United Nations General Assembly declared February 11th "International Day of Women and Girls in Science," in the hope of eliminating sexism in science. To connect with the international trend, the Department of Education organized a female science camp with various groups in 2016, so that female students from elementary schools to universities all had the opportunities to operate experiments on their own. The camp enabled them to experience the beauty and secret of the scientific world, inspiring their desire to explore and to dive into the wide ocean of science.



6

Constructing friendly workplaces, a friendly workplace for male nurses

People associate the nursing profession primarily with women. Because of the influence of gender stereotypes, men rarely chose to become nurses and found the workplace unfriendly when did. According to an internal survey in 2015 conducted for the "Report on Constructing a Friendly Workplace for Male Nurses" by the Department of Health, the ratio of male to female nurses in a total of 38 healthcare facilities in Taipei was 1:49. It suggests that nursing is an occupation with a high level of workplace gender segregation.

In order to improve gender friendliness in the workplace for nurses, the Department of Health first conducted a questionnaire survey in the entire city, in order to learn about the actual condition in workplaces. The Department undertook different projects in stages, including education, advocacy and inspection. Furthermore, the Department encouraged male nurses to choose clinical practice, improved the design of friendly spaces for male nurses, and provided front-line instructions in training nursing personnel of different genders.

To show respect for the nursing profession, the Department of Health not only corrected the term from "nurse" to "registered professional nurse (RPN)," but also encouraged the public to learn more about professional nurses in clinical medical settings. In this way, the Department of Health advocated for a friendly relationship between healthcare professionals and patients, as well as helping professional nurses of different genders to feel more comfortable and at ease in their workplaces.





臺北市性別平等辦公室

Office for Gender Equality, Taipei City Government