

Social Education

The 21st century is one of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning means enabling people to gain new knowledge that would help strengthen their individual competitiveness. To expand this concept and to enable more people to enjoy the benefits of lifelong learning, the MOE has established a general learning certification system, organised adult basic education classes and encouraged foreign spouses to attend language classes or to return to school.

Under the Lifelong Learning Training Programme, the MOE has organised learning programmes and events such as workshops, lectures and contests. In 2007, more than 800 thousand people participated in events aimed at enhancing humanistic culture, scientific knowledge, creativity and artistic skill.

The MOE has sponsored basic education classes for adults, especially those who had to discontinue their schooling (mostly females over the age of 55) and the growing population of foreign spouses who need to learn Mandarin, Taiwanese and English. In



SY 2008, a total of 2,326 classes were held, with 46,520 participants. Such adult education classes have helped Taiwan's illiteracy rate among those over 15 years old to drop from 7.11% of the population in 1989 to 2.37% in 2007 (from 1.3 million to just over 440 thousand).

The adult basic education classes, which include Chinese language, foreign languages and computer skills, attracted students of all ages, nationalities and backgrounds. The classes not only improved skills but also acted as a platform for cultural exchange. City governments and private institutes now regularly organise big events for students to receive their certificates of attendance for the classes. The events sometimes feature cultural performances by foreign students.

Social education in Taiwan is envisioned to play an important role in transforming Taiwan into a more equitable society. The government is expanding social education programmes and plans to partner with private organisations.

