

2012 Taiwan Elections



Jana Sehnáková, FSV UK

Presidential and Legislative Election

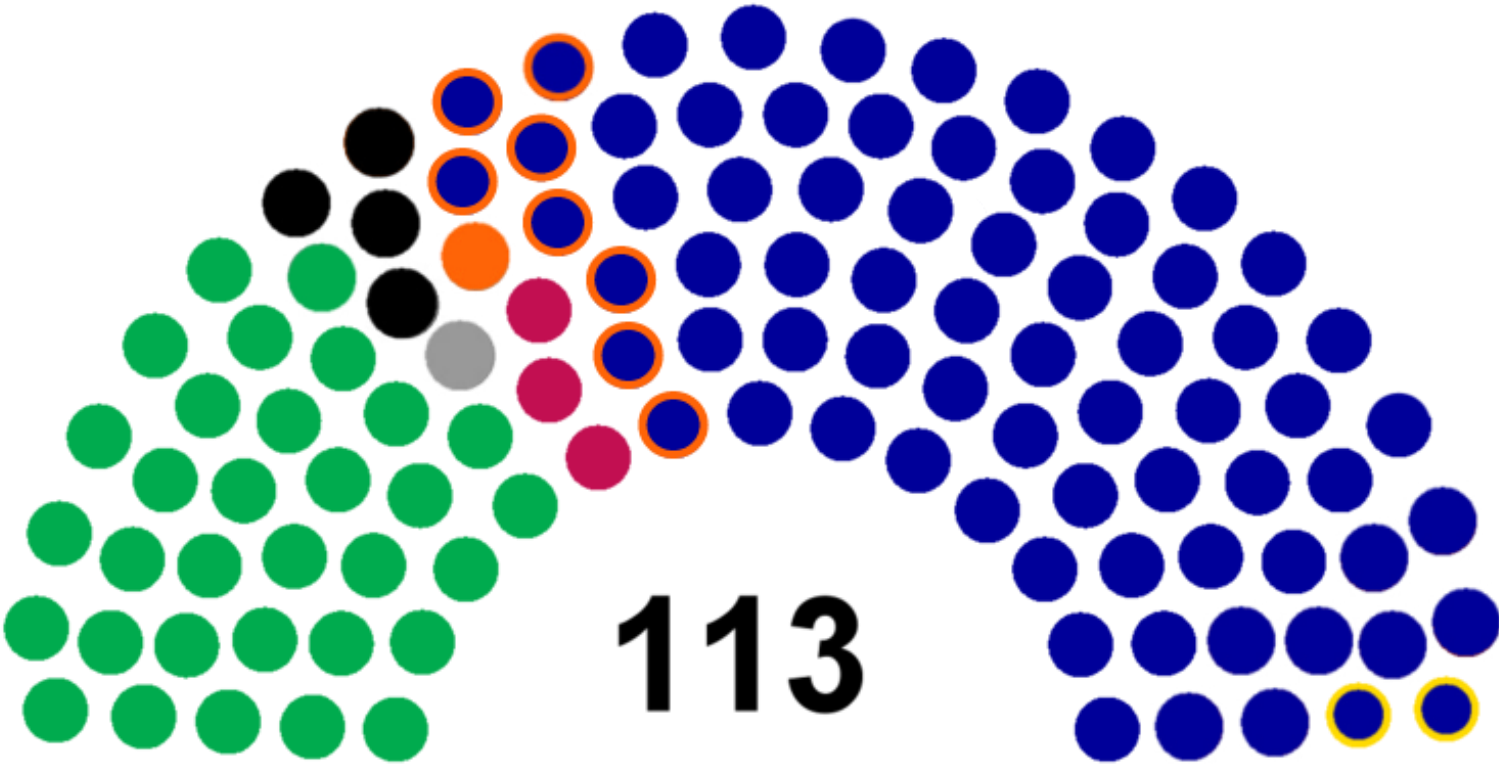
- Ballot day: Saturday, January 14, 2012
- Direct presidential elections
- Legislative Yuan election

- Electorate: 18m eligible voters
- 1.8m first-time voters (20-24 years old)

Legislative Elections

- Legislative Yuan: 113 seats
- 73 legislators elected in single-candidate district,
- 6 seats allocated to aboriginal representatives.
- 34 legislators elected at large, threshold – 5 percent of the vote
- Expectations: KMT hopes for 60 seats, DPP targets 50 seats

Legislative Yuan after 2008 Elections



Presidential Candidates

Ma Ying-jeou



- Incumbent
- Executive experience
 - Mayor of Taipei City,
 - Chairman of the KMT
- Degree from New York Law University and Harvard Law School
- Mr. Clean
- Runs on his record

Presidential Candidates

Ma Ying-jeou

Major accomplishments

- Improvement of cross-strait relations – ECFA
- Expanding/maintaining Taiwan's international space
- Economic growth
- No major corruption scandal revealed



Presidential Candidates

Ma Ying-jeou

Major criticisms

- ECFA and closer relations with China
- Failure to deliver



Presidential Candidates

Tsai Ying-wen

- former minister of the Mainland Affairs Council and Vice Premier.
- degree from Cornell University and London School of Economics
- she presents herself as a conciliator
- running primarily on social policies
- Hakka descent
- first female president?



Presidential Candidates

Tsai Ying-wen

- Link to Chen Shui-bian
- Lack of executive experience
- Lack of policy clarity?



Presidential Candidates

James Soong

- popular former governor of Taiwan, former member of the KMT
- Runs on the PFP ballot
- perceived as a spoiler in the election.
- Goal: increase the visibility of the PFP



General Observations

- key local issues and concerns.
- referendum on Ma Ying-jeou's policies
- DPP: Tsai Ying-wen capable of consolidating the party
- KMT: Ma facing several factions
- Third parties continue to be marginalized
- Unreliability of polls and 10-day period blackout on polls

Strategy

- “Taiwan Next” vs. “Taiwan Bravo”.
- In campaign spending, KMT towers over other parties
- Innovative fundraising by DPP piggy bank campaign

Subject	Amount spent on ads
1. Ma's campaign	2,120 ads for NT\$ 120 mil.
2. Tsai's campaign	1,899 ads for NT\$ 74 mil.
3. KMT	648 ads for NT\$ 48 mil.
4. KMT leg caucus	556 ads for NT\$ 30 mil

Piggy Bank Fundraising

- 143,000 piggy banks returned



Supporters

MA

- Business community
- Taishang – Taiwanese businessmen working/doing business in Mainland China
- Upper middle class
- North parts of Taiwan

TSAI

- native Taiwanese, farmers in the south of Taiwan
- low and middle class, blue-color workers

- Chen Shui-bian factor
- Watergate-style tactic
- Illegal donations
- Conflict of interest

- most of these controversies are aimed at reinforcing certain perceptions of parties - DPP tries to portray KMT as authoritarian, power-grabbing party, while the KMT tries to portray the DPP as a corrupt and paranoid party.

Major issues

- cross-strait relations
- domestic issues:
 - increasing gap between the rich and poor,
 - social justice,
 - reform of judicial and political system,
 - stagnating wages,
 - steep housing prices,
 - problem of aging population in rural areas
 - energy
 - environmental protection

Cross-Strait Relations

- Key question : “***Should Taiwan get closer to China or keep its distance***”
- Opposing views:
- KMT: “DPP would undo economic and cultural exchanges and progress with the PRC.”
- DPP “We cannot allow the KMT to offer footholds to Beijing by which they can for unification.”
- Discussion over 1992 Consensus, Taiwan Consensus, peace treaty with Beijing

China's Role in the Elections

- Beijing generally refrains from commenting on the topic of the Taiwanese elections
- Warning to Tsai: In case of Tsai winning the election and continuing to deny the “1992 Consensus”, Beijing forewarned that “cross-strait relations will come to a halt.”
- Xi Jinping: *“If the 1992 Consensus is denied, negotiations across the Strait cannot continue and all the agreements made in the past cannot be fulfilled. Cross-Strait relations will return to the volatile situation of the past.”*
- DPP victory – failure of Hu's policies?

Role of the U.S.

- U.S. supports Taiwan's "democratic choice" ,
"does not take any sides"
- But preference for Ma?
 - *Financial Times*: U.S. government sceptical of Tsai Ying-wen's ability to maintain positive development of cross-strait relations: "She left us with distinct doubts about whether she is both willing and able to continue the stability in cross-Strait relations the region has enjoyed in recent years,"
 - announcement of visa-waiver program
 - visits of high-level U.S. officials

Who will win?



Thank you for your attention.