

Across the Strait: The Annual Rendezvous — The 17th Straits Forum Ready to Open



Singapore, Singapore Jun 15, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - As the largest non-governmental exchange platform across the Taiwan Strait, the 17th Straits Forum, now in its seventeenth year, is set to open in Xiamen tomorrow. According to information released at the press conference, the 17th Strait Forum, themed "Expanding People-to-People Exchanges, and Deepening Integrated Development," will hold its main conference at 10:00 a.m. on June 15 at the Xiamen International Conference Center. The forum will feature 56 events across four major sections, community-level exchanges, youth exchanges, cultural exchanges, and economic exchanges, highlighting the shared aspirations of people on both sides of the Strait "for peace, development, exchange, and cooperation."

Four Key Sections to Highlight Diverse Integration, Offline Events to Drive Broad Communication

This year's forum adopts an approach "primarily featuring offline activities, combining centralized and distributed events." A weeklong series of key events will be held at the main venue in Xiamen, while related activities will also take place simultaneously across other prefecture-level cities in Fujian Province as well as in the Pingtan Comprehensive Experimental Zone.

Community-Level Exchange Section: With the goal of identifying "common ground" among communities across the Strait, this section will host 15 community-driven activities, including forums on women, labor, marriage, and clan relations. Topics will span areas such as community governance, Red Cross collaboration, and meteorological cooperation, facilitating face-to-face dialogue and fostering emotional resonance among people at the community level.

Youth Exchange Section: Closely tailored to the interests and needs of young people from Taiwan, this section includes 13 events such as the Straits Youth Forum, the Cross-Strait Youth New Media Forum, and Art Exchange Gatherings. These events provide platforms for mutual learning and personal development among youth from both sides, while helping them seize emerging opportunities for growth.

Cultural Exchange Section: Centered on the inheritance and promotion of Chinese culture, this section will feature 15 cultural exchange events focused on Mazu (Sea Goddess), Guan Gong (God of War and Loyalty), Chen Jinggu (Lady Linshui), Hakka heritage, and more, ensuring the vibrancy of traditional Chinese culture among the general public. For example, the Mazu Cultural Week will include seven sub-events such as a medical exchange themed "Mazu and Health," drawing participation from over a thousand guests from Taiwan.

Economic Exchange Section: Thirteen events are planned in this section, including the Common Homeland Forum, Cross-Strait Themed Township Matchmaking, and the Straits Financial Forum. These initiatives are designed to expand cooperation across various sectors, enable early access to the opportunities brought by Chinese modernization, and ensure that Taiwan compatriots can share in the benefits of development on the mainland.

Forum Gains Power through Fourfold Foundation, Cross-Strait Involvement Sees Escalation

The forum exhibits four defining characteristics: "continuously deepening the foundation of civilian exchanges," "consistently demonstrating achievements in integrated development," "steadily expanding space for youth exchanges," and "actively sustaining high participation rates among Taiwan compatriots. These highlights further strengthen the forum's civilian nature, the tangible results of cross-strait integration, and dynamic youth interaction. Remaining true to its longstanding positioning as a platform that is "civic-driven, community-rooted, and broadly inclusive," the forum continues to focus on livelihood-centered topics. For instance, the Cross-Strait "Village BA" Basketball Invitational, featuring teams from villages with the same names on both sides, will assemble a "bilingual commentary team" speaking both Mandarin and the Minnan dialect, connecting both sides through the "southern Fujian dialect." Similarly, the Dongshan Guan Gong Cultural Tourism Festival in Zhangzhou will organize 16 sub-activities around the theme "Connected by Guan Di, Integrating across the Strait," drawing widespread participation from Taiwan residents through its culturally grounded programming.

This year's forum also centers on the "Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Supporting Fujian in Exploring New Paths for Cross-Strait Integrated Development and Building a Demonstration Zone for Cross-Strait Integrated Development" (hereinafter referred to as the "Opinions") issued in 2023. Various events such as Cross-Strait Rural Integrated Development and the Common Homeland Forum have been organized accordingly. For example, Pingtan's "Common Homeland Forum" will announce new policies on small-scale cross-strait trade and launch the "Lan (Pingtan) Tai (Taiwan) Tong (Connection)" service platform, promoting the creation of a pioneering region for a cross-strait common market. Meanwhile, Sanming's Rural Integration Development Forum comes with supporting investment promotion and achievement exhibitions, attracting Taiwan compatriots to participate in industrial integration.

Responding directly to the needs and voices of young people, this year's forum will host a variety of youth exchange activities including the Straits Youth Forum, the Straits Audiovisual Season, the Straits Reading Conference, Cross-Strait Art Exchange Gathering, Music Exchange Season, and a Youth Chinese Surname Origins Knowledge Contest. Additional events encompass the Cross-Strait Vocational Education Forum, Youth New Media Forum, and the Forum on Caring for the Growth of the Next Generation. Beyond the dedicated youth section, other exchange sections also integrate youth

participation. For example, the Cross-Strait Youth Craft Design Innovation Event in Anxi, Quanzhou, is facilitating the establishment of the mainland's first integrated rattan and iron industry design innovation and marketing center in Taiwan. Meanwhile, the Kinmen-Xiamen Common Living Circle Forum is supporting the launch of Taiwan youth entrepreneurship bases in Fujian, providing assistance for young Taiwanese seeking internships, employment, or entrepreneurial opportunities.

The forum has received enthusiastic responses from various sectors in Taiwan. The Taiwan Talent Matchmaking Fair in Xiamen, already held earlier, attracted nearly 100 organizations and a large number of Taiwan participants, with youth accounting for approximately 80% of participants. The Cross-Strait Ethnic Song Festival saw more than half of the performers come from Taiwan, while the Cross-Strait Dragon Boat Race, held in May, brought together 920 competitors from both sides of the Strait, collectively creating a beautiful picture through traditional cultural activities.

Since the release of the "Opinions" in 2023, central government ministries, national departments, and the Fujian provincial government have consistently introduced policies to facilitate integrated development. At the central level, 11 ministries and commissions have introduced policy documents covering economic, social, and cultural domains. For example, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the General Administration of Customs have each issued specific measures supporting Fujian's construction of the integrated development demonstration zone. On the provincial front, building upon three previous rounds of 45 policy measures, Fujian Province has added 17 new initiatives this year, focusing on cooperation in the service sector between Fujian and Taiwan, as well as the development of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, among other areas. This brings the total to 62 measures across four batches, tangibly enhancing the sense of fulfillment and well-being among Taiwan compatriots. Currently, the Demonstration Zone for the Integrated Development across the Taiwan Strait has yielded a growing body of pioneering experiences, with Fujian increasingly becoming the "first home" for Taiwanese people and enterprises arriving on the mainland.

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