

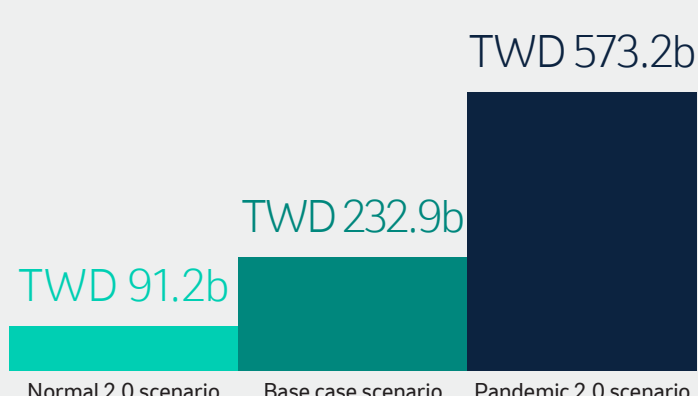
A Neglected Burden: Ongoing Economic Cost of COVID-19 in Taiwan



Thanks to effective public health measures taken by the authorities to suppress and contain the virus in the early days of the pandemic¹, Taiwan managed to avoid negative economic growth in all three years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, it was through the emergence of novel variants such as Omicron that the vast majority (99%) of Taiwan's COVID-19 infections occurred in 2022.² This has imposed and continues to impose some economic burden in Taiwan through **direct costs to the health system**, and **indirect productivity losses** to working age individuals, families and businesses.

The estimated economic cost of COVID-19 in Taiwan is around **TWD 91.2 billion per year**



If no measures are taken to address the volume and severity of COVID-19 infections,

the estimated economic cost will be **TWD 232.9 billion** to **TWD 573.2 billion** per year.³

The direct economic costs to the health system

The cost of acute outpatient care is around **TWD 15.4 billion per year**, but this outlay helps to ease the **direct economic burden on the health system** and reduce **productivity losses**.



The indirect economic costs of COVID-19

Older populations

Taiwan is now facing an **aging population** and infections in the older population impose around **TWD 24.9 billion per year** in costs from productivity losses on the Taiwan economy.



Older people⁴ who are infected with COVID-19 and require care from working age adults result in indirect economic cost of around **TWD 18.7 billion per year**.



Illnesses in older people who are working are estimated to cost **TWD 5.1 billion in productivity losses per year**.

When older people (e.g. grandparents) who care for children are unable to do so, the economic cost is around **TWD 1.1 billion per year**.



Children

Infections in children impose an economic cost of around **TWD 17.9 billion per year** due to productivity losses when adults are absent or less productive at work while providing care for children.



There are direct and indirect economic costs of COVID-19 incurred in Taiwan, especially to vulnerable groups.

A better understanding of these burdens may improve how we navigate the course of this and other potential health crises in Taiwan.

1. From 2020 to 2021.
 2. Our World in Data, cumulative reported cases and deaths for Taiwan from 2020 to 2021. Accessed in December 2022.
 3. Normal 2.0 is a lower estimate scenario, while the base case and Pandemic 2.0 are scenarios where volume and severity of COVID-19 infections are higher. In Taiwan, the Normal 2.0 scenario is the most likely scenario due to effective public health measures implemented during the pandemic.
 4. Older people refers to those aged 65 years and above.
 5. Figures not separately cited in this release are derived from the report: *A Neglected Burden: The Ongoing Economic Costs of COVID-19 in Australia, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong*. 2023 May 5.