

# 2025 Presidential Election :

## DP Lee Jae-myung became the 21<sup>st</sup> President of Korea

June 2025



Source: Newsis

On 4 June 2025, **Lee Jae-myung of the Democratic Party (DP) was elected as Korea's 21st President**, securing 49% of the vote in an election marked by a 79.4% turnout. He defeated People Power Party (PPP) candidate Kim Moon-soo by a margin of 8.27%. The result signals a strong public mandate for regime change and ushers in a powerful new administration. With the DP holding 171 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly (NA), Lee now commands both the executive branch and a legislative majority—laying the groundwork for bold reforms and decisive policy execution.

As this was a by-election triggered by a vacancy, his presidential term officially began at 6:21 a.m. on 4 June 2025.

## 2025 Presidential Election outcome at a glance



# The President of Korea Lee Jae-myung

Democratic Party

Vote share **49.42%**  
(Voter turnout 79.4%)



**Democratic Party**  
Lee Jae-myung



**People Power Party**  
Kim Moon-soo

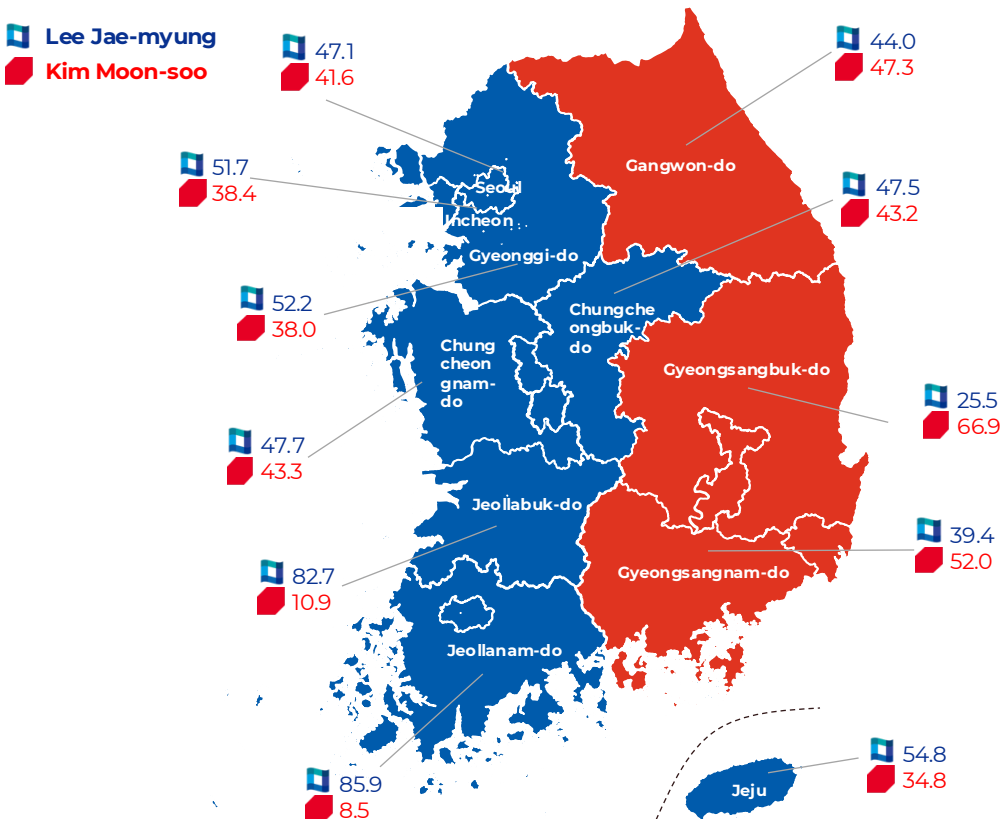


**Reform Party**  
Lee Jun-seok



Source: National Election Commission

## Voter share by regions



Source: Yonhap News

## Second highest early voting turnout

Conducted on 29 and 30 May, early voting turnout reached an impressive **34.74%**, marking the second highest rate in Korean presidential election history. Although slightly lower than the 36.93% recorded in the previous presidential election in 2022 —when early voting was held on a Friday and Saturday—the strong participation this year, despite being scheduled on weekdays, suggests that many voters had already made up their minds early, demonstrating a widespread desire for political change in the current climate.

According to the NEC, Jeollanam-do recorded the highest early voting turnout at 56.50%, while Daegu had the lowest at 25.63%. This regional contrast reflects longstanding political tendencies, with Jeollanam-do traditionally serving as a stronghold for progressive parties, and Daegu consistently favoring conservative candidates. Seoul's turnout came in at 34.28%, closely mirroring the national average.

## An Election That Drew Widespread Attention



Voters waiting in line to cast their ballots during early voting

Source: Yonhap News, Maeli Economy

## Final turnout surges past expectations

On 3 June, the final voter turnout stood at **79.4%**, marking a 2.3 percentage point increase from the 77.1% turnout in the 20<sup>th</sup> presidential election in 2022. This represents the highest level of voter participation since the 15<sup>th</sup> presidential election in 1997, which saw a turnout of 80.7%.

On 3 June, at 8:00 pm, the exit poll by Korea's three major TV stations, KBS, MBC and SBS, provided the first official outlook of this election—**Lee projected to obtain 51.7%** of the total votes cast, beating PPP candidate Kim Moon-Soo on 39.3% and Reform Party (RP) candidate Lee Jun-seok on 7.7%.



## President-Elect: Lee Jae-myung



Source: Yonhap News

At a plenary meeting held on the morning of 4 June, the NEC officially confirmed Lee as the next President of the Republic of Korea, following breakdown of vote shares of the candidates:

- **Lee Jae-myung (DP) – 49.42 %**
- Kim Moon-soo (PPP) – 41.15 %
- Lee Jun-seok (RP) – 8.34 %

**Lee Jae-myung secured victory with a lead of 8.27%**—a result that came as no surprise, given that he consistently led every public poll throughout the presidential race without once falling behind. While he fell just short of an outright majority, Lee garnered 17.28 million votes—the highest vote count ever recorded in a Korean presidential election.

### Lee's inaugural speech – pragmatism & unity

On 4 June at 11:00 a.m., Lee delivered his inaugural speech at the NA. The event served as a formal declaration of the launch of the new administration, and was held in a simplified format focused on the oath of office, reflecting President-elect Lee Jae-myung's determination to immediately address key state affairs following his election. Approximately 300 attendees—including the five major heads of the government, party leaders, NA members, and Cabinet members—were present at the event.

In his oath of office, President-elect Lee pledged to become a “president for all,” placing national unity at the forefront of his message.

Also placing economic recovery at the forefront of his agenda, he **announced the immediate launch of an “Emergency Economic Response TF.”** Reaffirming the pragmatism he consistently advocated during his presidential campaign, he stated, **“Whether conservative or progressive, if a policy is effective, I will adopt it without bias.”** He added, **“Whether it's a policy from Park Chung-hee or Kim Dae-jung, I will choose based on practicality and results.”**

He also pledged to **use public finance as a catalyst for restoring a virtuous economic cycle, to guarantee creative and proactive business activity, and to shift toward a more flexible, negative-based regulatory framework.**

Highlighting Korea's leadership potential in advanced industries, he committed to large-scale investment and support in sectors such as AI and semiconductors, aiming to elevate Korea as a global industrial powerhouse. He also promised to accelerate the country's transition to a renewable energy-based society and to promote balanced regional development through projects like the construction of a national energy highway.

On foreign policy, he pledged pragmatic, national interest-driven diplomacy, asserting that Korea would transform the turbulence in global economic and security conditions into strategic opportunities.

Emphasizing national unity as a final and central task, he stated, "There are no conservative problems or progressive problems—only the problems of the people and Korea," concluded his speech with a strong message of reconciliation and social cohesion.

The president-elect is set to assume office and begin official duties immediately following the inauguration on 4 June, bypassing the establishment of the customary 60-day Presidential Transition Committee. As this is a by-election triggered by the impeachment of the previous president, the incoming administration will forgo the usual transition process and move directly into governance.

Since the day of the inauguration, the president-elect is expected to unveil a sweeping transition—beginning with the nomination of the next prime minister, the announcement of key presidential aides, and the rollout of priority diplomatic initiatives, particularly regarding U.S. tariffs, and more.

### On priority diplomacy – U.S. negotiation ahead of July

President-elect Lee Jae-myung is expected to hold his first meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump during the G7 Summit in Canada, scheduled for 15–17 June. If he attends, a brief encounter with President Trump is likely, serving as both a symbolic and strategic starting point for Lee's U.S.-focused diplomatic and trade negotiations ahead of July.

## New government's priorities



Source: Newsis

Table 1: Expected key schedule of the new administration

Key schedule	Moon Jae-in administration		Lee Jae-myung administration <i>[expected]</i>
	Date	Relative Day	Date
Presidential election day	9 May 2017	D-day	3 June 2025
Presidential inauguration	10 May 2017	D+1	4 June 2025
Prime Minister nomination	10 May 2017	D+1	4 June 2025
Cabinet nominee announcement begins	21 May 2017 ~	D+12	15 June 2025 ~
National Planning Committee launches	22 May 2017	D+13	16 June 2025
Government reorganization plan announces	24 May 2017	D+15	18 June 2025
Ministry briefings start	24 May 2017 ~	D+15	18 June 2025 ~
National Policy Agenda announcement	19 July 2017	D+71	13 August 2025

### The launch of the National Planning Committee

Another core of this accelerated transition is **the launch of a National Planning Committee**, which will function similarly to a traditional transition committee. The committee will be chaired by **Lee Han-joo**, head of the **Democratic Research Institute**, who played a central role in designing campaign pledges. This body will be responsible for crafting a detailed five-year plan for delivering Lee’s promises, reviewing implementation timelines and strategies, and reviewing legislative priorities.

While the National Planning Committee’s roadmap will be rooted in the president-elect’s campaign pledges, the committee is also expected to incorporate ideas from opposition parties, reflecting a commitment to national unity and willingness to build broader political consensus as the new government charts its course.

Observers widely anticipate that this transition blueprint will closely mirror the model used by President Moon Jae-in in 2017, when he also entered office through an early election following a presidential impeachment (see Table 1).





## What comes next

Officially bringing the nation's leadership vacancy to a close, **President-elect Lee now faces the urgent task** of restoring public trust and constitutional order, while navigating critical challenges including the global trade war, economic reform, social cohesion, and foreign diplomacy.

In particular, on the diplomatic front, Lee is expected to step into the international spotlight immediately—starting with tariff negotiations with the Trump administration in July, and continuing through Korea's hosting of the APEC Summit in November.

With the ruling DP securing the presidency and holding 171 NA seats, 192 with allies, the **new administration enjoys unprecedented policy momentum**. Unlike the gridlock under the previous Yoon government, President Lee now has the legislative support needed to swiftly implement his agenda. Amid challenging domestic and global economic conditions, the government is expected to **pursue bold, fast-moving reforms**. **Speed and execution are likely to define this term**, with major policy announcements and implementation happening in rapid succession.

Businesses should stay closely attuned to the administration's policy direction and be ready to adjust strategies quickly in response to a government moving with greater urgency than in past cycles. Proactive monitoring mechanisms will be essential to ensure timely, informed engagement as priorities evolve and reforms accelerate.

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