

Early Presidential election in Korea

10 April 2025



Source: Kukmin Ilbo

3 June 2025 has been set as the date for Korea's 21st presidential election by Acting President Han Duck-soo, following the Constitutional Court's removal of President Yoon from office. The decision triggers a compressed 60-day timeline to elect the next leader.

Though less than a week has passed since the Constitutional Court's ruling, both major parties are already in motion. The **Democratic Party(DP)** had begun preparing for a possible early election ahead of the ruling, while the **People Power Party(PPP)**, previously constrained by its opposition to impeachment, is now seeing a wave of candidacy declarations.

This newsletter outlines the election schedule and early candidate dynamics in the lead-up to a fast-paced campaign.



2025 Presidential by-election calendar

Official election timeline

DP primary

PPP primary

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
				4 April D-60 Impeachment upheld	5	6
7	8 D-56 Election date announced	9	10	11	12	13
14 D-50 Primary candidate registration	15	16 D-48 Preliminary candidate screening	17	18	19 D-45 Daejeon primaries results	20 D-44 Busan primaries results
21	22	23	24	25	26 D-38 Gwangju primaries results	27 D-37 Seoul/others primaries results
28	29 D-35 Primary runoff	30	1 May D-33 DP nominee finalization	2	3 D-31 PPP nominee finalization	4 D-30 Resignation due date from positions limited to run for election
5	6	7	8	9	10 D-24 Official candidate registration	11
12 D-22 Election campaign period	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 D-14 Overseas voting period	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 D-5 Early voting	30	31	1 June
2	3 D-day Election day					



2025 Presidential election's major candidates

Democratic Party

Leading figures among declared/expected to declare contenders



Lee Jae-myung

Former 2nd term
Democratic Party Leader

- Current 2nd term NA member
- Former Gyeonggi-do Governor
- Former 2nd term Mayor of Seongnam-si
- Former human rights lawyer



Kim Dong-yeon

Gyeonggi-do Governor

- Former Minister of Economy and Finance
- Former Minister of the Office of Government Policy Coordination
- Former MOEF* bureaucrat

People Power Party

Contenders expected to declare:



Kim Moon-soo

Former Minister of
Employment and Labor

- Former 2nd term Gyeonggi-do Governor
- Former 3rd term NA member
- Former labor activist



Hong Joon-pyo

Mayor of
Daegu Metropolitan City

- Former 2nd term Gyeongsangnam-do Governor
- Former 5th term NA member
- Former prosecutor



Ahn Cheol-soo

4th term NA member

- Former IT company CEO
- Former professor
- Former medical doctor



Oh Se-hoon

4th term Mayor of
Seoul Metropolitan City

- Former NA member
- Former environment activist
- Former lawyer



Han Dong-hoon

Former People Power
Party Leader

- Former Minister of Justice
- Former prosecutor



Yoo Seong-min

Former New Frontier Party*
Floor Leader

- Former 4th term NA member
- Former Korea Development Institute researcher
- Former economist

Third parties



Reform Party Lee Jun-seok

NA member

- Former Reform Party Leader
- Former People Power Party Leader



Rebuilding Korea Party

: One open primary for all pan-opposition parties

- The party is currently calling for a **fully open primary** to select a unified progressive candidate through a 100% public vote



As of 10 April, 20 members of the PPP have declared their intent to run, including former Labor Minister Kim Moon-soo, who previously held the highest approval rating among potential ruling party contenders. Acting President and Prime Minister Han Duck-soo is also viewed as a possible entrant, following a rise in internal support after recent high-profile activities in his interim role - including a phone call with U.S. President Trump on trade. With additional candidate expected to enter the race, the PPP's nomination process is expected to be remain closely contested and fluid, shaped by the absence of a clear frontrunner and shifting post-impeachment dynamics.

In contrast, the DP has had a more measured rollout. With former party leader Lee Jae-myung widely regarded as the presumptive nominee, only a few others have formally declared, contributing to a quieter start.

Both parties will begin primary contests next week, with two weeks of regional rounds culminating in national conventions in early May. As the field takes shape, early signals on policy direction will warrant close attention.

This importance is heightened by the structure of the early election. With no presidential transition committee, the elected candidate will assume office immediately following the 3 June vote. For businesses and stakeholders, this compressed timeline underscores the need for early intelligence gathering, stakeholder alignment, and scenario-based strategy development to ensure readiness and effective positioning under the next administration.

Next steps and strategic outlook

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