



Taiwan Elections 2024: Presidential Candidate Policies

	LAI CHING-TE (DPP)	HOU YU-IH (KMT)	KO WEN-JE (TPP)
	On maintaining the status quo, where Taiwan exercises de facto autonomy under the name of the Republic of China without formally declaring independence or agreeing to unify with mainland China.		
Cross-strait relations	<p>Lai Ching-te prefers a more assertive position regarding Taiwan's self-determination and sovereignty, but has moderated his stance to appeal to a broader base.</p> <p>'Four-pillar Plan for Peace':</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Enhance deterrence. 2) Economic security equates to national security. 3) Build partnerships with democratic countries around the world. 4) "Steady and principled cross-strait leadership." <p>Won't rule out dialogue with the mainland based on reciprocity, dignity, and without preconditions.</p> <p>Against foreign interference in Taiwan's election; supports a ramp up of public security education and fostering national identity to counter absorption.</p>	<p>Hou Yu-ih follows former president Ma Ying-jeou's line that both the mainland and Taiwan "should not recognize the sovereignty of each other and should not deny the administrative rights of each other."</p> <p>Proposes a 'middle-way' approach and that all consensus on cross-strait engagement be built upon the Republic of China Constitution and the Cross-Strait Act.</p> <p>Hou's approach involves a 'three Ds strategy' combining deterrence, dialogue, and de-escalation to maintain stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the broader Indo-Pacific region.</p> <p>Proposes to relaunch controversial Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) with the mainland.</p>	<p>Ko Wen-je believes dialogue with the PRC should be based on 1) parity and dignity 2) and the five principles of mutual acknowledgement, understanding, respect, co-operation, and absolution.</p> <p>Does not endorse independence or unification, but hopes that Taiwan can act as the connection linking China and the U.S. in their strategic rivalry, while exemplifying democracy for China.</p> <p>Believes safeguarding Taiwan's democratic system is the bottom line in cross-strait relations.</p> <p>Proposes to increase punishment for leaking state secrets, and to enhance standard operating procedures for both anti-infiltration (against the CCP) and information security management.</p>
	All candidates have demonstrated dedication to strengthening Taiwan-U.S. relations with personal visits to the U.S., and have also made efforts to connect with Japanese government officials.		
Diplomacy	<p>Lai aims to work with running mate Hsiao Bi-khim on the foundation of Tsai's foreign policies (i.e. 'Taiwan NEXT,' upholds democratic and human rights values, stands with the democratic camp).</p> <p>Promises accession to the CPTPP.</p>	<p>Hou promises accession to the CPTPP in four years, also advocates for joining the Indo-Pacific Economic Forum and launching negotiations to join the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).</p> <p>Proposes expanding Tsai's New Southbound Policy to Indo-Pacific countries and deepen Taiwan's linkages with them.</p>	<p>Proposes that Taiwan join RCEP instead of the CPTPP.</p> <p>Advocates for "pragmatic diplomacy" not bound by ideological constraints and names.</p> <p>Would actively support countries it has diplomatic relations with, and move away from dollar diplomacy, reducing development assistance with no tangible benefits.</p>
Defence	The candidates share a consensus about building Taiwan's defensive capabilities to deter military adventurism from Beijing.		
	<p>Lai seeks to strengthen military capabilities, alliances, and economic ties with partners to deter China from military attacks.</p> <p>Supports the current one-year conscription requirement.</p>	<p>Hou proposes to shorten conscription requirement to four months, and opposes the DPP's 'Three Plus One Military Service' solution to make military service for undergrad male students flexible.</p> <p>Vows to push for domestic submarine-building program, and to increase weapon purchase from the U.S.</p>	<p>Ko proposes to increase Taiwan's defence budget to 3 per cent (currently 2.5%) of GDP.</p> <p>Proposes the establishment of a platform for U.S.-Japan-Taiwan trilateral security dialogue and to strengthen security collaboration with Indo-Pacific and European nations.</p> <p>Would encourage foreign companies to manufacture military equipment in Taiwan, and leverage civil tech power in AI, drone missile projects.</p> <p>Proposes recruiting soldiers mainly through enlisting, supplemented by conscription.</p>
Economy	<p>Lai proposes to move away from a development model driven by production factors and adopt an innovation-driven economic model to further grow semiconductor industry and AI.</p> <p>Proposes to grow tech sectors, invest in green energy and precision medicine.</p> <p>Would promote social enterprises in cities/counties and regional revitalization industries, and expand social investment.</p> <p>Would develop Taiwan into Asia's asset management centre by welcoming foreign investment, and into a fintech innovation centre by nurturing digital talent and soft/hardware development.</p> <p>Would adjust minimum wages based on CPI and economic growth indicators.</p>	<p>Hou proposes to adjust minimum wage to C\$1,425 (NT\$33,000) per month, halve income tax for low-income workers, and levy a wealth tax.</p> <p>Would provide tax deductions to listed companies if profit is used to raise employees' wages.</p> <p>Proposes five beneficial policies for farmers, such as increasing monthly pensions and setting up a comprehensive cold chain system for the delivery of agri-goods.</p> <p>Proposes 'Three Arrows of Economic Reform': Integrate into regional economy, improve environment for investment, business innovation/transformation.</p> <p>The KMT economic platform generally stresses boosting Taiwan's external economic connections, particularly with China, to maintain its export-driven growth.</p>	<p>Ko proposes to attract international investment, nurture local startups, and train high-skilled workers to develop an AI-driven industry transformation as Taiwan transitions toward a high-value, innovation-led economy.</p> <p>Would boost trade liberalization and diversify Taiwan's trade relationships to decrease reliance on China.</p> <p>Would enact a law on economic security, and offer solutions to water and labour shortages.</p> <p>Would push for salary disclosure and ESG responsibilities of publicly listed companies, and amend the Act for Development of Small and Medium Enterprises.</p>
Energy	<p>Lai proposes to accelerate a net-zero transition and develop renewable energy, leveraging strategies including 'second energy transition' with diversified sources of green energy, and 'twin digital and green transitions' for industries (including carbon pricing).</p> <p>Prominent goals include phasing out nuclear power by 2026, and coal-fired power thereafter.</p> <p>Would build low-carbon business models and shape a low-carbon lifestyle.</p>	<p>Hou proposes nuclear power plants as part of the solution for securing a stable power supply for the island, which includes plans to restart operations at all of Taiwan's four nuclear power plants.</p> <p>Proposes to develop green energy without harming the environment, and specify development locations for optoelectronics.</p> <p>Cease all coal-fired power generation by 2040, and reach net-zero carbon emissions in 2050.</p>	<p>Ko recommends extending the service life of the Ma'anshan (only active) and Kuosheng nuclear power plants, and addressing safety concerns surrounding the Lungmen Nuclear Power Plant (Taiwan's fourth plant for which construction was halted after a 2014 referendum).</p> <p>Would increase the share of clean energy to 40 per cent by 2030.</p> <p>Proposes a fivefold increase in EV adoption within 10 years.</p>
Housing	<p>Lai proposes three major housing policies: 1) discount tax incentives to discourage house hoarding, 2) increase loan amounts and interest subsidies for young homebuyers, 3) promote social housing, with a commitment to raise the total number to 500,000 units by 2032.</p>	<p>Hou proposes diversifying public housing, and curbing property speculation to stabilize housing prices.</p> <p>Proposes actual price registration for rental housing, giving priority to families with more than two children when it comes to social housing.</p> <p>Support young homebuyers with maximum mortgage of C\$647,746 (NT\$15 million).</p>	<p>Ko proposes building more social housing, issuing more rent subsidies, and reforming tax system to release vacant homes.</p>