

## President Tsai

Born in 1956 in Taipei City, Tsai Ing-wen traces her family roots to Fangshan Township of Pingtung County in southern Taiwan. Growing up at an auto repair shop run by her parents, her family background instilled in her the spirit of small and medium-sized enterprises—professional, dynamic, resilient, and hard-working.

Dr. Tsai graduated from National Taiwan University with a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1978. She then studied in the US and the UK, obtaining a Master of Laws degree from Cornell University Law School in 1980 and a Ph.D. in Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1984, specializing in international trade law and competition law.

After finishing her studies and returning to Taiwan, Dr. Tsai served as an associate professor and then a professor in the Department of Law at National Chengchi University (1984-1990), a professor at the Soochow University School of Law (1991-1993), and a professor in the Department of International Business at National Chengchi University (1993-2000).

Dr. Tsai began her tenure as part of Taiwan's trade negotiation delegation in the late 1980s. By 1990, Taiwan began working on the bid to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), eventually gaining admission to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2002. She was on the front lines of the process during key negotiations in her capacity as Chief Legal Advisor (1992-2000). She was thus a first-hand witness to this landmark event in the history of Taiwan's economic transformation. In the 1990s, Dr. Tsai also regularly attended Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting, and chaired the Group on Services (GOS) of the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI).

Beginning in the late 1990s, cross-strait relations experienced several changes. Dr. Tsai served successively as Senior Adviser to the Mainland Affairs Council (1994-1998), Senior Adviser to the National Security Council (1999-2000), and Chairperson of the Mainland Affairs Council (2000-2004), devoting her efforts to the development of cross-strait relations.

Dr. Tsai joined the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 2004 and became a DPP legislator at-large (2005-2006). She was then appointed to serve as vice premier (2006-2007). After the DPP returned to the opposition, Dr. Tsai was elected DPP chairperson for two successive terms (2008-2010 and 2010-2012), the first woman to chair a major political party in Taiwan. She returned as DPP chairperson in 2014, a position she held until 2018.

Dr. Tsai represented the DPP in Taiwan's 13th-term presidential election in 2012, becoming Taiwan's first female presidential candidate. She ran again as the DPP candidate in 2016, and was elected as the nation's 14th-term president. The first female head of state in Taiwan's history, Tsai Ing-wen is also the first female head of state in Asia who was not born into a political family. Dr. Tsai represented the DPP in the nation's 15th-term presidential election in 2020 and was successfully re-elected with over 8.17 million votes, the highest total in history. Dr. Tsai was officially sworn in as the 15th-term President in May and concurrently serves as DPP chairperson.