

## Time to start working on direct democracy: Ko

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Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je, right, blows out the candles on a cake during a rice harvest event in Beitou District yesterday, which was also the mayor's birthday.

**Photo: Chien Jung-fong, Taipei Times**

With the accessibility of the Internet, now is the time to transition from a representative democracy to a direct democracy, Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je (柯文哲) said yesterday.

The theme of his mayoral election campaign next year is to be “progressive values,” Ko said during a speech at National Taiwan University on Saturday, adding that the idea came from thinking about how he won the previous election by winning “a battle between generations,” but that it should progress into politics that are value-driven.

Values such as democracy, freedom and openness have become more important, he said, adding that since the city government's planned budgets are open for public viewing online, city councilors' supervision would not be needed.

When asked about his remark yesterday at a rice harvest event in the city's Beitou District (北投), Ko said that while ancient Greece had direct democracy, it evolved into a system of representative democracy because the population grew.

“With the popularity of the Internet in the 21st century, I think there is another way to appeal to public opinion,” he said. “This should be a transitional period from representative to direct democracy, and the way to make those adjustments can be considered further.”

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However, Ko quickly added: “It is not a problem in Taipei, because our councilors are on average very professional. Some even say they are more professional than legislators, so I always make an effort to study the issues brought up by every councilor in council sessions.”

He said he still believes that politics will move toward direct democracy, but how long the transition will take is unknown, maybe up to 100 or 300 years.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2017/08/07](#)