

**Minister Lee Sang-min Expands Opportunities
to Export Digital Platform Government Systems and
Paves the Way for the Spread of Korean Public Governance to Italy**

- Bilateral discussion on future strategy and support for Korean businesses' entry into the Middle East in the digital platform government sector
- “Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance” held to commemorate the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Italy, sharing Korea's best practices in public administration

The Key Achievements of the Korean “Public Administration Cooperation Group”

Countries Visited	Key Achievements
Saudi Arabia (March 3-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Korea's digital platform government introduced at LEAP 2024 keynote, paving the way for Korean businesses to expand into the Middle East• Korean businesses' expansion into Saudi Arabia and cooperation on digital government discussed, amongst other key topics• Agreeing to sign MOUs with the Saudi Arabian Ministry of the Interior and the Qatari Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
The United Arab Emirates (UAE) (March 5-6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with ministers responsible for digital transformation and artificial intelligence (AI)• Introducing the Korean digital platform government and requesting collaboration with Korean tech companies
Italy (March 6-9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first-ever “Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance” held to share knowledge and experience on advanced Korean public administration, including government innovation, human resources management, and digital procurement systems• Meetings with three Italian ministers to discuss AI-based digital public administration innovation, locally-led balanced development, and public safety cooperation• Exploring solutions to the problem of abandoned houses, including examining how to apply the ‘One Euro Project’ in Maenza, Italy, to Korea

Minister of the Interior and Safety Lee Sang-min visited the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Saudi Arabia), the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Italy from March 3 to 9 leading the “Public Administration Cooperation Group” (hereinafter referred to as the “Cooperation Group”) to spread best practices in Korean public administration and promote cooperation with public administration ministries.

The Cooperation Group's visits to Saudi Arabia and the UAE, a follow-up to President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visits last year, resulted in the government's support for the digital platform government's overseas expansion of Korean companies and expanded sales in the public administration sector.

In addition, the Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance, jointly organized by the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) and the Italian Ministry for Public Administration, was held to disseminate advanced public administration best practices from MOIS, the Korean Ministry of Personnel Management and the Korean Public Procurement Service. Minister Lee Sang-min also met with the three ministers for Public Administration, Regional Affairs and Autonomies, and the Interior to further solidify bilateral cooperation between the two nations.

Meanwhile, the minister visited the city of Maenza in Central Italy to learn more about regional projects aimed at curbing regional population outflow and to explore policy solutions for solving abandoned houses' problems.

Saudi Arabia: March 3 - 5

During the visit to the Middle East, the Cooperation Group met with six ministers from Saudi Arabia and the UAE to expand our presence in the region by exporting digital platform government systems and to strengthen international cooperation in digital government. The Coordination Group participated in "LEAP 2024" held for four days from March 4 to 7 with more than 1,800 companies and 215,000 attendees attending. To re-organize its oil-export-dependent economy, Saudi Arabia launched "Saudi Vision 2030," a government program that aims to diversify the country's economic portfolio through the nurturing of various industries such as high-tech. The Saudi government has since amplified its efforts to position itself as the Middle East Tech Hub and has held the world's biggest tech event, "LEAP," since 2022.

* "LEAP 2023" recorded an attendance of 900 companies and 170,000 attendees from 183 nations.

On the first day of the LEAP 2024 conference, Minister Lee Sang-min delivered a keynote speech introducing Korea's digital platform government based on private-public partnerships and called for continued cooperation with the Korean government and businesses.

Moreover, Minister Lee met with the Saudi Arabian Minister of Communications and Information Technology and host of LEAP 2024, Abdullah Alswaha, and the Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Majed Al Hogail, one of the key figures behind the

country's biggest urban construction project, NEOM, to discuss the prospects of strengthening cooperation in cloud technology, smart city, AI and facilitating Korean businesses' expansion into Saudi Arabia. In this regard, Saudi officials expressed their expectation that Korea will play a vital role in promoting Saudi Vision 2030, just as it did in Saudi Arabia's past construction projects.

Meetings were also held with His Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef Al Saud, Saudi Arabia's Interior Minister, and the LEAP 2024 attendee, Qatari Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Mohammed bin Ali Al Mannai, upon their urgent request for a meeting with Minister Lee before his departure. The two ministers proposed a speedy signing of an MOU with the MOIS. Minister Lee responded that he would pursue it as soon as possible. On top of this, Minister Lee requested the participation of the Saudi Ministry of Interior in the upcoming "CSI Korea 2024" in October, and Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef Al Saud responded that he would personally lead a Saudi delegation to attend the conference for the first time.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE): March 5-6

The Coordination Group then went to Dubai, the UAE, a bridgehead for Korean companies to enter the Middle East. The UAE is considered to be an emerging powerhouse in digital government, with a high ranking in the recent "United Nations E-Government Survey 2022."

* Ranked 13th in the "United Nations E-Government Survey 2022" and 4th in the "GovTech Maturity Index"

Minister Lee met with H.E. Ohood Al Roumi, the Minister of State for Government Development and Future and Chairman of the Higher Committee for Government Digital Transformation, and H.E. Omar Sultan Al Olama, the Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence (the world's first AI minister) to discuss digital government, government innovation, AI, the digital economy, and the digitally marginalized.

The meeting with H.E. Ohood Al Roumi was filled with enthusiasm as attendees, including the UAE Commissioner for Digital Government and the Director General of Government Services, presented on the UAE's enhanced level of digital government. H.E. Omar Sultan Al Olama showed great interest in AI-based CCTV video analytics to survey nationwide road traffic, further expressing his desire to collaborate with Korean IT companies. Minister Omar Sultan Al Olama, in light of Minister Lee Sang-

min's request to attend the UN Public Service Forum and Awards Ceremony (to be held in Korea in June), promised to attend.

Italy: March 6-9

The visit to Italy was organized to commemorate the 140th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Italy and to lay the foundation for renewed cooperation in public administration at the Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance. The bilateral cooperation between Korea and Italy has been strengthening since the meeting between President Yoon Suk Yeol and Italian President Sergio Mattarella during President Mattarella's visit to Korea in November last year. Minister Lee's visit to Italy is expected to boost cooperation in public administration, government innovation, local autonomy, and public safety.

The main agenda items discussed at the Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance included AI-based government innovation, innovation in personnel management, ICT-based government procurement system, Korea's knowledge and expertise in advanced public governance, and future promotion strategies. In his opening remarks, Italian Minister for Public Administration Paolo Zangrillo expressed his wish to actively collaborate with South Korea, which is ranked as the world's most advanced country in the OECD Digital Government Index. In response, Minister Lee emphasized that the government's ability and innovation to respond immediately to the people's needs through the introduction of digital technologies such as AI are more important than ever, and added that the two nations' cooperation will lay a new foundation for the advancement of public administration.

Minister Lee Sang-min also met with three Italian ministers respectively and had in-depth discussions on AI-based digital public administration innovation, locally-led balanced development, and public safety. Minister for Public Administration Paolo Zangrillo expressed great interest in Korea's AI-enabled services of the Korean public administration and expressed his intention to attend the upcoming UN Public Service Forum and Awards Ceremony (to be held in Korea in June) and hoped for the Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance to become an annual event between the two countries.

At the meeting with the Minister for Regional Affairs and Autonomies Roberto Calderoli, the two ministers discussed the importance of locally-led development and the role of the central government. In particular, Minister Lee introduced the four special zone development policies related to jobs, education, living conditions, and

culture, led by the region and supported by the central government. Minister Calderoli showed his deep interest in the progress of the said policies and hoped that their meeting would serve as an opportunity to strengthen mutual cooperation.

In a meeting with the Minister of the Interior Matteo Piantedosi, both ministers discussed ways to promote cooperation in public safety, including forensic science and narcotics investigations. Again, Minister Lee requested the participation of the Italian Interior Ministry in the CSI Korea 2024 to be held in Korea this year.

On March 8, Minister Lee visited Maenza, a city in Central Italy, to see the region's abandoned house renovation project to combat local depopulation and met with Mayor Claudio Sperduti to attain insights on solving abandoned house problems in Korea.

Maenza, which has suffered from depopulation due to the exodus of young people to the cities, launched the One Euro Project initiative in 2021 to attract young people, out-of-towners, and foreigners to the town. The project, spearheaded by the local government, aims to revitalize abandoned homes on a town-by-town basis by selling them for a symbolic price (1 euro) and giving the buyer three years to renovate them for whatever purpose they wish, such as housing, accommodation, or commercial space. Since the project's launch, Maenza successfully attracted various domestic and foreign newcomers to the region.

Mayor Claudio Sperduti and City Councilman Fabio Di Girolamo of Maenza hosted a policy briefing for the delegation, guided them on a site visit to an abandoned house, and explained that the main objective of the project is to give new value to abandoned houses in response to the declining population. Mayor Claudio Sperduti commented that Minister Lee was, to date, the highest-ranking foreign dignitary ever to visit the city and that his visit will greatly benefit Maenza's promotion of the "One Euro Project." Minister Lee said that the number of abandoned houses in Korea has exceeded 132,000 and that he would actively promote policies to address the problem by applying Maenza's re-purposing of abandoned houses.

The dispatch of the Public Administration Cooperation Group has enabled us to showcase Korea's advanced public administration system and experience to the international community and expanded opportunities for cooperation with various countries," said Minister Lee Sang-min. He also stated, "We will make sure that the meetings with the governments of Saudi Arabia and the, which have a strong interest and willingness to invest in the digital and AI sectors, lead to the expansion of Korean businesses in the Middle East."

“The Korea-Italy Cooperation Forum on Public Governance will further elevate the two nations’ long-standing partnership and continue fruitful bilateral cooperation in various areas.”

