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**PPOL**  
*Division of Public Policy*  
公共政策學部



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# ACTING HEAD'S MESSAGE

Greetings and a vibrant welcome to the auspicious Year of the Dragon as we unveil the 5th edition of our biannual PPOL newsletter.

The past months' festivities have hopefully provided a rejuvenating break, allowing us to reconvene with renewed vigor for the remainder of the 2023-24 Academic Year. We return, eager to embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

In these early chapters of 2024, our Division has been actively enhancing its academic and research capacities, aiming for a richer, more robust educational landscape. We're committed to nurturing our growth alongside the HKUST GZ campus, fostering a synergistic environment for learning and discovery.

As we continue to forge ahead, I am confident that the collective efforts of our faculty, researchers, and postgraduate students will soon be showcased for all to appreciate. Until then, I invite you to delve into this edition, which captures the essence of our recent endeavors. Thank you for your continued engagement and support.



**Professor Naubahar SHARIF**  
Division of Public Policy, HKUST





# AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS





# Professor Alex Jingwei He

Ranked as the World's Top 2%  
Most-cited Policy Scholar  
by Stanford University 2023

The Stanford World's Top 2% Most Cited Scholars ranking (2023) was released in early October 2023. Professor Alex Jingwei He, Associate Professor of PPOL and Acting Director of IPP has been ranked 413 out of 22449 scholars worldwide in the field of Political Science and Public Administration based on 2022 single year impact.

Stanford's list of the top 2% most cited scientists in the world identifies scholars who have published multiple highly cited papers ranked according to various metrics on citation impact across multiple scientific fields and subfields based on Scopus data for career-long, and, separately, for single recent year impact. The selection is based on the top 100,000 scientists by c-score (with and without self-citations) or a 2% or above percentile rank in the sub-field.

This marks the second consecutive year that Prof. He has obtained a place in this esteemed ranking, underscoring the global resonance and significance of his contributions to the field. Prof. He's area of expertise encompasses comparative social policy, health policy and governance, as well as policy innovation and entrepreneurship. This recognition of Prof. He's sustained excellence and commitment to his research brings immense pride to the Division of PPOL and HKUST. Congratulations to Prof. He!



**Prof. Alex Jingwei He**  
Associate Professor, PPOL  
Acting Director, IPP





## Professor Alex Jingwei He

Received the Karl Loewenstein Fellowship

Prof. Alex Jingwei He has been honored with the Karl Loewenstein Fellowship by Amherst College in the United States in November 2023. The fellowship, established in memory of Karl Loewenstein, William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Science at Amherst College in Massachusetts, aims to afford scholars the opportunity to dedicate time to political science and public policy research. In line with this, Prof. He will impart knowledge through a course entitled "Public Policy in Stories: East Asian Perspectives" to students at Amherst College, renowned for its standing as a leading liberal arts institution in the US. Moreover, he plans to leverage the insights gained from teaching this innovative course upon his return to HKUST. During his fellowship, Prof. He will also finalize several manuscripts.



# Professor Magdalena Klemun

## Published the Analysis on Solar Energy Cost Trends in Nature Energy

Prof. Magdalena Klemun, Assistant Professor of PPOL, has recently published a paper entitled “Mechanisms of Hardware and Soft Technology Evolution and the Implications for Solar Energy Cost Trends” in **Nature Energy** (Impact Factor: 67.439). Based on a collaboration with experts from MIT and Harvard, including Goksin Kavlak, James McNerney, and Jessika Trancik, the paper presents a new model to analyze the cost evolution of solar energy systems, capturing the contributions of both hardware and software technology features to total cost reductions since the 1980s. The model reveals that soft technology in designing and deploying solar energy systems contributed far less to the total cost declines of solar installations than estimated. Driving solar energy costs down in the future will likely require either new approaches for improving soft technology or new hardware designs that reduce system dependencies on soft technology features. Either way, continued cost reduction of solar energy and other clean energy technologies will likely require a stronger focus on improving technology features that are non-hardware based. Prof. Klemun’s work has caught wide media attention and has been featured by MIT in EurekAlert!, Mirage News, MIT News, TechXplore, and USA News Hub.

Prof. Klemun focuses on understanding how technologies’ economic and environmental performance evolves as a function of policy and engineering design choices, with a particular interest in the role of hardware vs. non-hardware (‘soft’) innovations. Prof. Klemun did her Ph.D. and postdoctoral research at the Institute for Data, Systems, and Society (IDSS), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), M.S. in Earth Resources Engineering from Columbia University, where she studied as a Fulbright Scholar, and her B.S. in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology from Vienna University of Technology.



**Prof. Magdalena Klemun**  
Assistant Professor, PPOL

### References:

Adam Zewe, To Improve Solar and Other Clean Energy Tech, Look Beyond Hardware, MIT News

Klemun, Magdalena M., et al. “Mechanisms of hardware and soft technology evolution and the implications for solar energy cost trends.” *Nature Energy* 8.8 (2023): 827-838.

MIT, Beyond Hardware: Key to Advancing Solar, Clean Energy Tech, Mirage News

nature energy

Analysis

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41560-023-01286-9>

## Mechanisms of hardware and soft technology evolution and the implications for solar energy cost trends

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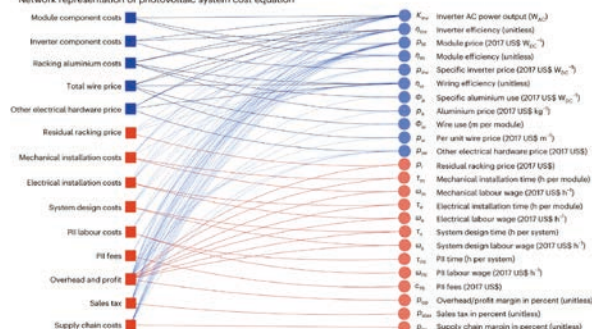
Published online: 17 August 2023

Check for updates

Magdalena M. Klemun<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>, Goksin Kavlak<sup>1</sup>, James McNerney<sup>1,4,5</sup> & Jessika E. Trancik<sup>1,4,5</sup>

Technology hardware and deployment processes (‘soft technology’) seem fundamentally different, but little work examines the nature of this difference and its implications for technology improvement. Here we present a model to study the role of hardware and soft technology in

Network representation of photovoltaic system cost equation



## Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin

won the Asian Universities Alliance (AUA)  
Scholars Award 2023-2024



**Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin**

Assistant Professor, PPOL

Prof. Julien de Troullioud de Lanversin has won the Asian Universities Alliance (AUA) Scholars Award and will be visiting Tsinghua University in June 2024 to establish connections and collaboration with international peers to work on joint projects on US-China relations and international security.

### About the AUA Scholars Award

The AUA Scholars Award program was initiated by AUA in 2018. A flagship project award aimed at fostering international research collaboration and academic advancements, the program provides a robust platform for meaningful academic exchanges and synergy between the 15 AUA top universities by facilitating them to host scholars from other member universities for a duration of 2 weeks. The AUA scholars will have the opportunity to expand their research horizons and cultivate international academic partnerships with other overseas peers.





# ONGOING PROJECTS

Leading Faculty	Funding Agency	Project
Prof. Naubahar Sharif 白立邦 教授	Executive's Project List 2023- Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust	Enhancing the Mental Health of Hong Kong's Non-Chinese Youth Aged 15-24 (2024-now)
	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	Strengthening Family Relationships for Hong Kong's Ethnic Minority Communities in the Aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic (2023 - Now)
	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	Supporting Ethnic Minority Elderly with Mental Health Needs (2023 - Now)
	Mental Health Initiatives Funding Scheme, Advisory Committee on Mental Health	Preparing and Deploying Ethnic Minority Lay Leaders to Promote Mental Well-being Among Hong Kong's Major Ethnic Minority Communities (2022 – Now)
	Center for Aging Science, HKUST	Towards a More Inclusive Hong Kong: Covid-19, Mental Well-being, and Mitigation Strategies for a Multicultural Elderly Community (2022 - Now)
	Institute for Emerging Market Studies, Center for Economic Policy, HKUST	Influence of and Interplay Between Culture and Chinese Outward FDI into Southeast Asia (2022 - Now)
Prof. Masaru Yarime 鎗目雅 副教授	Global Engagement Funds, University College London	Public Perspectives on Personal Data Use for Personalized Covid-19 Advice (2022 - Now)
	Institute for Emerging Market Studies	The Smart City as a Field of Innovation: Effects of Public-Private Data Collaboration on Innovation in the Guangdong Province and Implications for the Greater Bay Area (2022 - Now)
Prof. Pengyu Zhu 朱鵬宇 副教授	RGC - Public Policy Research Funding Scheme	The Persistence of Behavioral Changes in Post-Pandemic Hong Kong: Implications for Transportation, Housing and Economic Development Policies 後疫情時代香港社會行為轉變的持續性研 究：對於交通政策、住房政策以及經濟發 展政策的指導意義 (2022 – Now)
Prof. Alex Jingwei He 和經緯 副教授	RGC - General Research Fund	Technocrats and Mid-Level Policy Entrepreneurship in China: Explaining Local Policy Innovations in the Social Welfare Arena 中國大陸的技術官僚與中層政策企業家： 解釋社會福利領域的地方政策創新 (2023 – Now)



# RESEARCH SHOWCASE





# Science, Technology and Innovation Policy

Santos, Gonalo D., **Naubahar Sharif**, and Jack Linzhou Xing. "Translating STS in China: Disciplinary Struggles and Future Prospects." *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society* 9.1 (2023): 23-49.

This article analyzes a debate in Mainland China over how to designate and integrate the international field of STS (science and technology studies) in Chinese academia. Emerged at the turn of the millennium, this debate confirmed the increasing hold of STS in China, but it also revealed significant tensions regarding the general orientation and the place of the field in Chinese academia. These tensions reflect not only larger contradictions found in other globalized local instantiations of STS but

also Chinese specificities. To understand both dimensions, this article approaches the rise of STS in China as a creative process of translation mediated by context-specific globalized struggles and negotiations. This approach builds on Asia-focused postcolonial discussions of translational practices to capture some of the distinctive features of the field of STS in China, including the strong influence of the Marxist tradition, the continuing hold of modernist-positivist approaches, and the strong control exercised by the party-state on academia. The Chinese example is used to highlight the translational diversity of the global STS project and to raise general questions about the future of STS across borders in the twenty-first century.

Döme, Viktória, **Kira Matus**, and Weronika Cycak. "Innovation Strategies Meet Sustainable Development: Variations in Sustainable Innovation Policy Instrument Mixes of Ten Small OECD Countries Across Five Sustainability Sectors." *Social Science Research Network* 4553981.

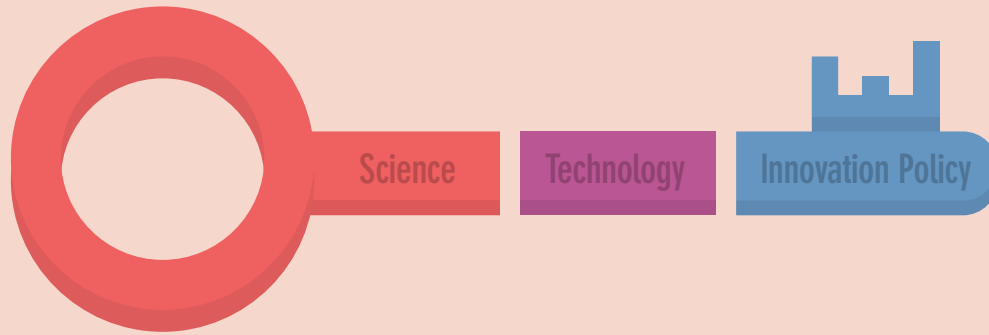
This paper provides the first comprehensive multi-sectoral and multi-country analysis, examining a dataset of 1722 sustainability-related policy interventions from 2008-2020. Three significant policy gaps that hinder innovation were identified by using FAMIS model: misalignment of national strategies and

concrete plans; lack of support for production and scale-up of technologies; limited support for technology adoption, adaptation, and retirement. It is found that countries with a mixed economic system generally used more sustainability-related policy interventions and focused on targeted R&D funding and market creation (e.g., Denmark, Sweden). Whereas countries with a market economic system largely focus on policies that support firm innovation (e.g., Israel, New Zealand) or enable a conducive environment for innovation through creating spaces, building networks, and capacity (e.g., Switzerland). Policy recommendations are offered based on these findings.

Yoshino, M., Sadlek, B., **Yarime, Masaru**, & Ali, A. (2023). Knowledge Absorption Pathways for Eco-Innovation: An Empirical Analysis of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the European Union. *European Journal of Innovation Management*

This study contributes to the literature on eco-innovation (EI) and the circular economy (CE) by providing insights into the factors of external knowledge absorption that facilitate the

adoption of a subset of EIs called proactive-EIs. Proactive-EIs involve collaborations among multiple stakeholders, the use of technical knowledge and a greater level of investment than other innovations. This study observed the environmental actions taken by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in resource-intensive sectors in the European Union (EU), and elements related to the national context were compared.



Xie, Siqi, Ning Luo, and **Masaru Yarime**, “Data Governance for Smart Cities in China: The Case of Shenzhen,” *Policy Design and Practice* (2023).

This paper explores the appropriate system for governing various data in developing smart cities by investigating China’s data governance mechanisms and its distinctive institutional characteristics. Through conducting an exploratory study of the case of smart city development in Shenzhen and examining critical

opportunities and challenges in data governance. Open data platforms have been developed through close cooperation between government and technology enterprises. Regulations have been introduced to protect data security and privacy and facilitate the exchange and use of data for innovation. However, it was found that stakeholders are not sufficiently incentivized to provide accurate information, resulting in the value of data not appropriately recognized or measured, discouraging the sharing and use of data.

Papyshev, Gleb, and **Masaru Yarime**, “The Challenges of Industry Self-Regulation of AI in Emerging Economies: Implications of the Case of Russia for Public Policy and Institutional Development,” in Mark Findlay, Ong Li Min and Zhang Wenxi, eds., *Elgar Companion to Regulating AI and Big Data in Emerging Economies*, Edward Elgar, 81-98 (2023).

This paper discusses how self-regulatory approaches popular for the governance of AI can potentially be problematic for emerging economies. The findings are derived from the fieldwork conducted in Russia in 2021-2022. The key challenges include the need for more

technical expertise within the government, the lack of civil liberties, the interwovenness between the public and the private sector, the lack of motivation for ethical development, and protectionism over the local IT industry. Some initial remedies for the shortcomings of the industry self-regulation for AI in emerging economies can be found in how governments mitigate the negative effects of regulatory capture. These include promoting greater balance and diversity in the competition among different stakeholders, reforming the institutional context within which regulators operate, and opening up the regulatory process to various external checks and balances.

**Yarime, Masaru**, ed., “Data and Sustainability,” Special Collection of Articles, *Data & Policy*, Cambridge University Press (2023).

The articles in this special collection on Data Governance for Innovation for Sustainable Smart Cities and Facilitating Data-Driven Innovation for Sustainability explore policy measures and approaches to promote data-driven innovation for sustainable smart cities. Collaboration among stakeholders is crucial for collecting, sharing, and using various available data to foster innovation. However, differing interests

and motivations among stakeholders may hinder data exchange. Concerns include handling sensitive data, data security, privacy, and ethical use for behavioral change. Policy challenges encompass data ownership, accessibility, interoperability, incentives for data sharing, security, privacy, public trust, and cross-border data transfer. Innovative policy approaches like living laboratories and regulatory sandboxes are being considered. It’s vital to assess the impacts of these policy measures on driving data-driven innovation while addressing societal concerns.



# Environmental Policy and Sustainability

**Klemun, Magdalena M., et al.** "Mechanisms of hardware and soft technology evolution and the implications for solar energy cost trends." *Nature Energy* (2023): 1-12.

This paper examines the difference between hard and soft technology, nature of this difference and its implications for technology

improvement. A model is presented to study the roles of hardware and soft technology in cost evolution and apply it to solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. The usefulness of modeling dependencies between technology costs and features is shown to understand past drivers of cost change to inform future technology development.

**Zhao, Xiaofan, et al.** "Managing Extreme Rainfall and Flooding Events: A Case Study of the 20 July 2021 Zhengzhou Flood in China." *Climatic Change* 11.11 (2023): 228.

This paper presents a case study-based approach by focusing on the record-breaking Zhengzhou flood in 2021 and examines the governance capacity of inland cities in North China for managing extreme precipitation and flooding events from the perspective of the flood risk management process. Based on an in-depth case analysis, it hypothesizes that inland cities in North China still have low-risk perceptions of extreme weather events, which was manifested

in insufficient pre-disaster preparation and prevention, poor risk communication, and slow emergency response. Accordingly, it is recommended that inland cities update their risk perceptions of extreme rainfall and flooding events, which are no longer low-probability, high-impact "black swans", but turning into high-probability, high-impact "gray rhinos." Cities must make sufficient preparation for extreme weather events by revising contingency plans and strengthening their implementation, improving risk communication of meteorological warnings, and synchronizing emergency response with meteorological warnings.

**Wen, Z., Li, H., Wang, Y., Zhao, X., & Deng, X.** (2023). Can the Implementation of Household Waste Classification Mitigate Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Beijing? A Comprehensive Analysis of Recent Trends and Future Scenarios. *Heliyon*.

This study focuses on household waste in Beijing and utilizes life cycle assessment (LCA) and material flow analysis (MFA) to calculate global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in waste management systems and quantify the emission reduction potential of different measures. The results show that net emissions from the classification system in 2021 are 116.77 kg CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/t waste, reducing 61.82 % compared to the traditional mixed collection and transportation system. Three scenarios are designed to explore the emission pathway of the system toward 2060. In the business-as-usual (BAU) scenario, emissions will continue to grow to 108.57 × 10<sup>4</sup> t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr in 2060. In the Classification Efficiency Scenario and the Comprehensive Scenario,

emissions in 2060 will be cut to – 177.26 × 10<sup>4</sup> t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr and – 702.00 × 10<sup>4</sup> t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr, respectively. These results underscore the critical role of waste classification and recycling in mitigating the negative impacts of increasing waste volume. By 2060, combining waste classification with recycling can offset emissions by 803.51 × 10<sup>4</sup> t CO<sub>2</sub>-eq/yr, contributing 99 % to emission reduction potential.



## Social and Urban Policy

**He, Alex Jingwei** “Scaling-up through Piloting: Dual-Track Provider Payment Reforms in China’s Health System.” *Health Policy and Planning* 38.2 (2023): 218-227.

This paper puts forth ‘scaling-up through piloting’ as a distinctive pathway for strategically managing scaling-up in the health sector. It analyses the recent development of provider payment reforms in China, focusing particularly on the ongoing pilot programs, with data drawn from extensive documentary analysis and 20 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders,

including decision-makers and implementers. It is found that scaling up through piloting helps minimize the vast uncertainties associated with complex payment reforms and maximize the local adaptability of provider payment innovations, forging a phased implementation process, allowing new payment models to be tested, evaluated, compared, and adjusted in a full spectrum of local contexts before a national rollout. Key strategic scaling factors include necessary central steering, a pragmatic piloting design, strong technical capacity, and effective policy learning mechanisms.

**He, Alex Jingwei, Yumeng Fan, and Rui Su.** “Unpack the Black Box of Pilot Sampling in Policy Experimentation: A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of China’s Public Hospital Reform.” *Governance* (2023).

This paper elucidates the logic of selecting pilots in large policy experimentation programs. By focusing on China’s huge public hospital reform program and through a novel research design that combines comparative qualitative analysis

and illustrative case studies, the authors seek to explain the strategy for pilot selection. The analyses reveal five distinctive pathways of pilot sampling: piloting for challenge, piloting for advancement, piloting for innovation, piloting for action, and piloting for regional generalization. Each modality represents a specific experimental purpose. It is revealed that piloting is a versatile governance tool that can fulfill multiple functions in complex reforms.





**Zhu, Pengyu, et al.** “Looking Forward: The Long-Term Implications of COVID-19 for Transportation.” *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment* (2023): 103910.

This editorial provides a literature review on insightful investigations on the different long-term impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation sector; the investigations are, however, inevitably limited by the fact that the pandemic is not yet far behind us. It is predicted that there will likely be long-term pandemic impacts that have not yet been fully realized,

perhaps most importantly, changes in location choices for both households and firms and resulting changes in the spatial patterns of land use in our cities and suburbs. Furthermore, individuals’ stated preferences during the pandemic may not truly reflect their revealed choices during the post-pandemic era. The lessons and insights in this special issue are hoped to provide an early look into the future, informing decision-making and planning for our changed world.

**Zhu, Pengyu, Yuqing Guo, and Praveen Maghelal.** “Does Telecommuting Influence Homeownership and Housing Choice? Evidence Based on Pre-Pandemic Data.” *Housing Studies* (2023): 1-34.

This paper analyzes the impact of telecommuting on homeownership and housing type choices by applying a three-step instrumental variable analysis to the 2009 and 2017 U.S. National Household Travel Surveys. It is shown that households with telecommuters are more likely to be homeowners and live in detached or duplex houses than their counterparts. These effects are especially

prominent for middle-aged (30–55) households. Relying on robust and national representative historical data before the COVID-19 pandemic, this study provides convincing evidence on how telecommuting affects people’s housing decisions and thus has important implications for understanding the fast-evolving housing markets in the post-pandemic era when a growing number of telecommuters look for homeownership and extract spaces to accommodate home offices. It will provide important guidance for revisiting existing housing policies for urban and rural policymakers to meet the new demand and preferences.

**Anthony B. L. Cheung and Donald Low, 2023.** “Crisis Management and Administrative Reforms: Lessons from Hong Kong and Singapore,” Chapters 11 in Shaun F. Goldfinch (ed.), *Handbook of Public Administration Reform*, pages 182-206, *Edward Elgar Publishing*.

This book chapter reflects on the crisis management experience of Hong Kong and Singapore and highlights the lessons for governments around the world. Focusing on three major crises in the 21st century – the SARS

epidemic of 2003, the Global Financial Crisis of 2008-09, and the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020-22 – it examines the efficacy of crisis responses, policy learning, adaptation, and innovation, and crisis communications. Each crisis also exposed gaps and inadequacies in their crisis responses and management systems. Their experiences suggest that policy innovation is a process of adaptation and learning from past crises. Yet cognitive deficiencies were also observed, some of them systemic and others due to biases resulting from past crisis experiences.

**Yi, Fangxin, et al.** “Time Matters in Pandemic Risk Communication: A Moderated Effect of Information Timeliness on Stakeholder Perception in Singapore.” *Risk Analysis* (2023).

This study assesses the impact of timely warning messages on stakeholders’ perceptions of public health emergencies by analyzing the survey data (N = 538) from Singapore to explore the main effect of information timeliness on the respondents’ stakeholder perceptions. This effect is moderated by normative factors, including attention and threat perceptions. It is

found that the more timely the government updates the risk information, the more trustworthy the stakeholders appear in respondents’ opinions. Such an effect is weakened when the pre-decision attention or the threat perception interacts with the predictor independently. However, this effect on stakeholder perceptions becomes stronger if both moderators interact with the information timeliness. That is, an appropriate combination of the information released by the government can effectively enhance the image of the stakeholders during the pandemic.

**Cruz, Christian Joy Pattawi, Kira Matus, and Stuart Gietel-Basten.** “The Extent of Use of Surveys in Policymaking: The Case of Hong Kong.” *Evidence & Policy* (2023): 1-22.

This paper measures the extent of survey research being used as evidence in policymaking in Hong Kong, it screened and examined Hong Kong LegCo documents utilized to enact 569 bills from 2000 to 2022 through document analysis. It is found that about 25% of bills utilized surveys as evidence, with differences across 18 policy areas and health services recorded the highest percentage of survey use in legislation. In the Hong Kong

legislature, surveys are primarily used to understand policy issues better. The mode of data collection, sample size, response rates, and representativeness of surveys are not commonly discussed in legislative documents. The study findings reaffirm previous research on the limited utilization of survey evidence in policymaking in Hong Kong, an Asian context with unicameral legislation and colonial history. The importance of survey evidence was highlighted in policy areas that directly impact the public, such as healthcare. The findings also highlight the important role of politics in investigating the use of surveys as research evidence for policymaking.

**Wang, Xinyi, Laurence L. Delina, and Kira Matus.** “Living with Energy Poverty: Uncovering Older People’s Fuel Choices in Urban China.” *Energy Research & Social Science* 104 (2023): 103247.

This paper explores the linkage between energy poverty and fuel choices. Aiming to answer the reason behind older people’s continued usage of honeycomb coal briquettes in affluent urban areas in China by analyzing older people’s subjective experiences and objective connections to their fuel use, their lived experiences with energy poverty are uncovered. The ‘Energy Cultures Framework’ is extended by including older people’s vulnerability attributes alongside their material culture, norms, practices,

and external influences. Using semi-structured interviews and participant observations in urban Wuhan, passive and active dirty fuel stacking were found among older people facing energy poverty. Passive dirty stacking is mainly caused by older energy-poor individuals’ material culture, external influences, and vulnerability attributes, whereas active dirty stacking is primarily associated with their norms, practices, vulnerability attributes, and related external factors. These findings provide strong implications for social and energy policy, particularly regarding the characterization of energy poverty, regulatory and infrastructural responses, social justice, grassroots governance, energy literacy, and cultural compatibility.



# PUBLIC POLICY DIALOGUE SERIES





# Hong Kong's Economic Challenges and Opportunities: Human and Financial Capital, Innovation and Technology

On 28 October 2023, Prof. Anthony Cheung, former Secretary for Transport and Housing, Advisor and former President at EdUHK, Adjunct Professor of PPOL, HKUST; Prof. Lui Tai-lok, Adjunct Research Chair Professor, former Vice President (R&D) at EdUHK; Prof. Yun-wing Sung, Associate Director of the Joint Shanghai-HK Development Institute, Associate Director of the Economic Research Centre, HKIAPS, Adjunct Professor, Department of Economics, CUHK; Dr. Wendy Wen Hong, LegCo Member for the Election Committee Constituency, and Prof. Fox Zhiyong Hu, Acting Head and Associate Professor, Department of Social Sciences and Policy Studies at EdUHK discussed the Policy Dialogue Series topic of “Hong Kong's Economic Challenges and Opportunities: Human and Financial Capital, Innovation and Technology”.

Prof. Cheung began the Dialogue Series by stating that the economy is the current greatest challenge that Hong Kong faces; however, the causes and solutions of such a challenge are not entirely economic. After being adversely impacted by the 2019 political unrest and Covid-19 pandemic, the anticipated speedy recovery was not materialised, and stuck in a double whammy of the sluggish worldwide economic situation, the sufferance of image and branding issues has become a new normal for Hong Kong. Internally, Hong Kong is facing a bottleneck of three major factors of production, i.e., land, labour, and capital. Prof. Cheung pointed out that Hong Kong is in need of reindustrialization and transformation of the



eco-system to groom an I&T hub and diversify its economic base. By putting Hong Kong under the context of Asia, Prof. Cheung showed Hong Kong's economic outlook from its stock market performance, property market downturn, foreign direct investment decline, over-dependence of investment from mainland China, and vulnerability to the economic situation of mainland resulted in fundraising level hitting the lowest in 11 years and so on. To Prof. Cheung, Hong Kong's competitiveness and historical advantages are declining. He pointed out that Hong Kong's future lies in a rising China and a rising Asia, but isolation from the West cannot be afforded. Prof. Cheung then addressed the serious challenge of brain drain that Hong Kong is now facing; he pointed out the fact that 95% of talents under the Top Talent Pass Scheme come from the mainland may indicate that Hong Kong is not a very attractive destination for talents from other parts of the world, and what





makes the situation worse is Hong Kong does not seem to have the capacity to retain talents.

Prof. Sung put the question under the context of regime change, he gave an insightful remark that historically, Hong Kong's fundamental change in the political regime had always led to painful structural adjustment; the exceptionally smooth first reversion in 1997 marked by continuity rather than disruption was due to myriad of favorable geopolitical factors, but the pain was delayed till the second reversion in 2020 with a shift of these factors. Still, since the megatrends are largely out of our control, Prof. Sung suggested that Hong Kong can only adapt and adjust. He further remarked that the integration of Hong Kong with the GBA has a long history ever since China's opening in 1979 and has already reaped the fruit, but deep integration will face numerous systemic constraints, and successful cultivation of an environment conducive to high-tech development requires long-term effort.

Dr Wendy Hong analogised Hong Kong's financial industry with the Wimbledon effect as although Hong Kong is an international financial centre, there are no local competitive financial institutions, and all big financial players are rooted outside Hong Kong. Dr. Hong attributed the IFC's rootlessness to its overly narrowly focused economic structure, or over-financialization, in which insufficient value-added economic activities are being squeezed out. Yet, the impossibility of the financial sector to provide exclusive development opportunities for all Hong Kongers results in limited quality opportunities for upward social movement. Therefore, she perceived two

Hong Kongs in a parallel universe: the "elite HK," the well-known IFC and super-connector, and the "mass HK," suffering from the hollowing-out economy, widened wealth gap, and reduced social mobility. Dr. Hong provides some suggestions for overcoming the "Wimbledon effect" in Hong Kong, including redefining the value of IFC, using the financial sector as the instrument to achieve policy objectives and diversifying the local economic base, empowering the "mass Hong Kong" by the "elite Hong Kong", she gave seven policy suggestions regarding Hong Kong's future development to rethink and redefine the value IFC by adding local dimensions, such as company re-domiciliation, art-tech fusion, sci-tech, and IP financing.

Prof. Lui gave examples of the proportion and numbers of regional headquarters, regional offices, and local offices in the past 30 years, pointing out that the number of regional headquarters, which is the major component of the economy emphasised by the HKSAR government, has been stagnant from 2009 and dropped in 2022; on the other hand, the composition of these regional headquarters show that international headquarters dropped while mainland China occupies the largest share in Hong Kong. Prof. Lui invited the audience to think about why Hong Kong would be the chosen platform to set up regional quarters and what Hong Kong's competitiveness is to take over all those opportunities. He suggested that there should be assessment tools (e.g., KPIs) to gauge Hong Kong's competitiveness and delineate Hong Kong's future economic performance and market response to improve Hong Kong's international profile.

## Hong Kong in the Greater Bay Area: Pioneer or Follower? .....

On 18 November 2023, Prof. Anthony Cheung, former Secretary for Transport and Housing, Advisor and former President at EdUHK, Adjunct Professor of PPOL, HKUST; Prof. Lui Tai-lok, Adjunct Research Chair Professor, former Vice President (R&D) at EdUHK; Prof. Heiwai Tang, Victor and William Fung Professor in Economics, Director of the Asia Global Institute, and Associate Dean for External Relations of Business School at HKU; Prof. Xun Wu, Professor of Innovation, Policy and Entrepreneurship, Society Hub at HKUST (GZ), together with Prof. Peter Tsan Yin Cheung, Professor of Practice in the Department of Social Sciences, EdUHK as moderator to discuss the topic “Hong Kong in Greater Bay Area: Pioneer or Follower?”

Prof. A. Cheung started the discussion by reaffirming that Hong Kong is part of the GBA. The question to be asked is whether Hong Kong is an active player and takes the lead in the GBA, the fastest-growing region of China. Referring to the “Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area”, Prof. A. Cheung pointed out that the essence of the Plan for the GBA is forward-looking and externally oriented, but due to the geopolitical changes in the past few years, some of the assumptions behind these objectives may have been affected, yet the goals are always relevant to Hong Kong. Prof. A. Cheung remarked that the GBA serves both Hong Kong’s needs and national aspirations and helps Hong

Kong’s third economic transformation. He said Hong Kong has always been playing the intermediary role between China and the rest of the world, but with the change of geopolitical context, this role needs redefinition. From the 21st century onwards, according to Prof. A. Cheung’s observation, China has gone into coordinated regional developments. GBA is one such instance, but these regional developments have been facing challenges, such as unbalanced economic growth between the Southern and Northern parts of China, greater gaps in terms of innovation capacity among regions, difficulties in ensuring equitable access to basic public services, and slow growth of the blue economy, in addition to the recent Covid and geopolitical challenges.

Prof. Tang approached the question from the economic perspective of how to enhance Hong Kong’s competitiveness. He explained that the globalisation we have today is very different from the one before 2008. Looking back at the history of Hong Kong from 1949 to 2008, Prof. Tang led the audience to see how Hong Kong had adapted according to the changes in China and the rest of the world. However, the fast deindustrialisation that Hong Kong’s economy has been going through poses a problem since Hong Kong has been overly relying on the four-pillar industries (finance, tourism, trading and logistics, and professional services, contributing around 60% of Hong Kong’s GDP,



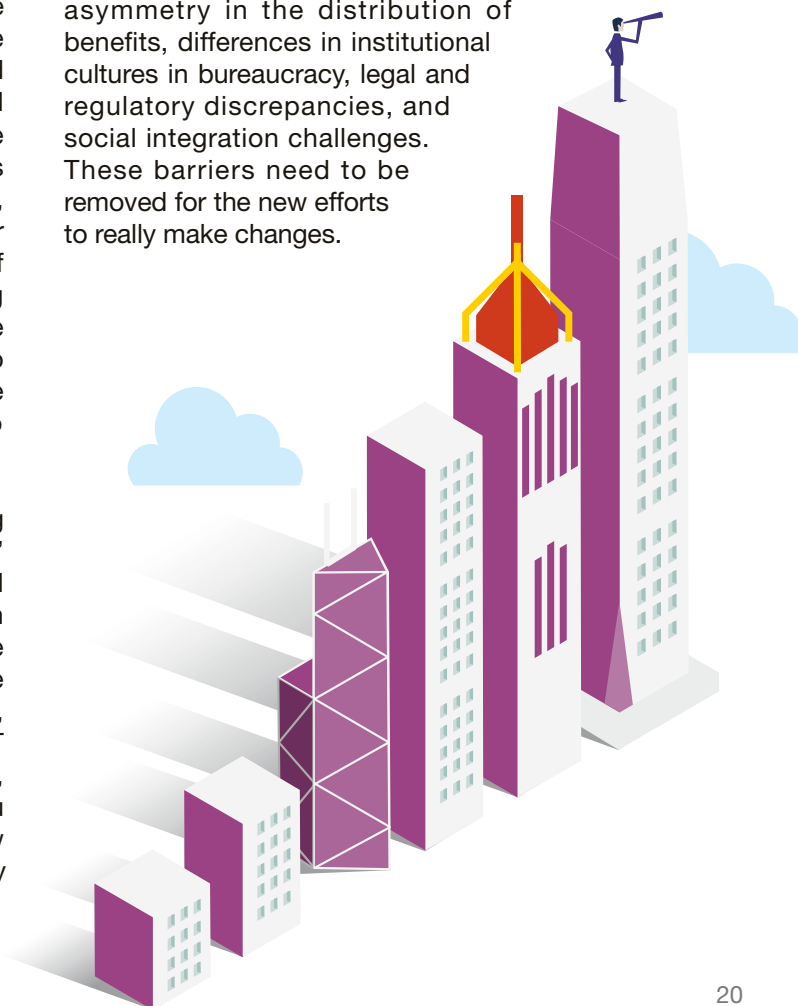




and 44% of its employment). Prof. Tang remarked that if Hong Kong's economy over-heavily relies on finance, it would not serve well for its resilience and adaptiveness. Prof. Tang remarked that Hong Kong is losing its competitiveness because, the previous 50% added value in its re-export has reduced to only 20% nowadays, as "Made in Hong Kong" is not as attractive as 20 years ago. In terms of the macroeconomy, Hong Kong is facing the challenge of having the middle class hollowed out, with its declining employment share and wage growth, creating an M-shaped society like Japan 15 years ago. In addition, Hong Kong is facing the challenge of an ageing population, economic headwinds, limited cross-border mobility, and insufficient commercialisation of scientific research. Therefore, Hong Kong requires a third economic transformation. The third economic transformation, according to Prof. Tang, needs to be more diversified, more industrialised, and innovative for Hong Kong to play a new role in a new era.

Prof. Wu approached the question by focusing on the role of I&T Hub, one of the "eight centres" under the national 14th 5-year plan, and comparing it against Hong Kong's past efforts in promoting I&T, such as building the science park, Cyberport, HK-Shenzhen I&T park, and the establishment of research institutes (ASTRI, HKRITA, NAMI, LSCM, InnoHK), ITF and IT Bureau. He reiterated the criticisms, challenges, and evaluation of these past efforts. Prof. Wu pointed out that although there are quite a few unicorn start-ups in Hong Kong, the I&T industry

contributes only a small percentage of the total GDP in Hong Kong, compared with 34.6% in Shenzhen. By comparing Hong Kong against Singapore, the latter accounts for 59% of Asian Regional Headquarters, while Hong Kong has only 18%. Singapore's R&D personnel is 2-3 times more than that of Hong Kong, with the number of granted patents 2 orders of magnitude higher than that in Hong Kong, the same for the revenue of technology transfer and licensing activities. Although world rankings of universities in Hong Kong are high and the gross domestic expenditure on R&D outperforms most of the other Asian peers, the university-industry collaboration remains limited, and university policies failed to encourage the commercialisation of scientific research. Prof. Wu voiced that the Hong Kong government should be more proactive in encouraging more investors in the private sector to facilitate knowledge transfer. Prof. Wu also pinpointed four main barriers to Hong Kong's integration into the GBA, namely, asymmetry in the distribution of benefits, differences in institutional cultures in bureaucracy, legal and regulatory discrepancies, and social integration challenges. These barriers need to be removed for the new efforts to really make changes.



Prof. Lui echoed with Prof. A. Cheung about Hong Kong's definite role as part of GBA. He pointed out the importance of conceiving how Hong Kong is contextualised in the region and highlighted two interfaces, first, how to serve our neighbours, and second, how to serve our neighbours in the international context. He suggested that one should look at the socio-spatial connection between Hong Kong and the GBA. Prof. Lui pointed out that the GBA is no longer a hinterland, and Hong Kong needs to consider how to connect with the GBA in a new way. Prof. Lui suggested that Hong Kong find new sources of international investors to maintain its competitiveness.

In the Discussion session, Prof. A. Cheung invited us to think about why Hong Kong still represents value-added. He suggested that instead of thinking about going to the past, today is the starting point for Hong Kong, and one should think of what extra value Hong Kong can offer. Prof. Tang emphasised that today's industrialisation should be interpreted as supply-

chain management with multiple stages of production, and we should think about which part of the supply chain Hong Kong can leverage; he suggested that if one thinks about the future of Hong Kong, one must think about the future distribution of economic activities across countries and between regions. He emphasised that Hong Kong's competitive advantage still largely relies on finance, so it is important to leverage financial talents and expertise. Prof. Tang also suggested that the financial sector should invest more in innovation. Prof. Wu provided insight into the three situations that can be turned into opportunities for Hong Kong to maintain its value and offer its competitive advantage: 1, the relative independence of emerging disruptive technologies (such as generative AI and robotics) from the supply and industry chain. 2, technology and economic competition due to geopolitical conflicts that render Hong Kong's basic research and technology development more valuable; 3, Hong Kong's unique position and resources compared with other GBA cities.





# CONFERENCES AND EVENTS



# External Review of the Master of Public Policy (MPP) Program

On 10 and 11 August 2023, our MPP program underwent its first external review. The panel members consisted of Prof. So Young Kim, Professor of the Graduate School of Science and Technology at Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST); Dr. Sean McMinn, Director of Centre for Education Innovation, HKUST; and Mr. Justin Hin Ching Ng, ESG Strategy and Sustainability Consultant and alumnus of PPOL's MPP program in 2021. Professor Huamin Qu, Dean of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies, Prof. Masaru Yarime, and Prof. Pengyu Zhu, co-directors of the MPP program, attended the external review.

The review panel recognized the achievements of the MPP program and gave constructive comments about the program; the scope of the review covered curricula and syllabi management, the program's linkage with science and technology, technical knowledge and expertise, gradings and assessment, career advising and development, and students' achievements relative to international benchmarking. The result of the review indicates strong evidence that the program has grown and adapted since its launch in 2018-19, and being the only 2-year taught master's program in Hong Kong, it has positioned its niche very well, as shown by an increase in applications for almost 6 folds (141 to 808 across 5 years). Benchmarking was conducted effectively to ensure the quality



of the program relative to similar courses offered by other universities. The program has successfully recruited internationally competitive faculty members by identifying the best talents across various backgrounds and diversified student populations (the dominant share of Chinese mainland students has changed from 97% to 88% over 5 years). The courses offered by the MPP program are marked with a clear set of grading criteria and rubrics and an effective and prompt feedback mechanism; the courses also make effective use of the case-based approach that connects principles and theories to relevant real-world initiatives.

Looking ahead, the MPP program will continue to offer students of diverse backgrounds with interdisciplinary learning and thinking skills by creating more systematic linkage with science and technology programs making use of the strong S&T education and research of HKUST. And for reputational and feedback reasons, the MPP program will carefully monitor the careers and performance of its graduates. With the rise of ChatGPT and generative AI, professors of PPOL will need to state clearly their preference in allocating ChatGPT use within their respective syllabi and, at the same time, there will be more emphasis on students' conceptual, procedural, metacognitive knowledge and higher-order thinking in courses and assessments.



# Professor Naubahar Sharif and Professor Donald Low

## Shared Policy Insights on the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders Development Program

Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL, and Professor Donald Low, Director of Leadership and Public Policy Executive Education, Professor of Practice of PPOL shared their insight and thoughts on issues concerning policy and regulatory framework arising out of the rapid evolution of AI technology in this year's Young Global Leaders (YGL) Development Program of the World Economic Forum (WEF), a five-day Education Module held from 18 to 22 September, hosted by HKUST, under the theme "Our AI-Driven Future: Prospects and Pitfalls". Both Prof. Sharif and Prof. Low are co-lead faculty of the YGL program.

During the Program, Prof. Sharif steered young global leaders on a journey to uncover the region's vision for the next decade and discussed the national and local policies driving technocentric growth, he remarked in his speech "Technology Development and Leapfrogging in the GBA" that AI, with its transformative potential, is redefining public policy problem-solving and decision-making. However, it also presents challenges that require considered policymaking, from ethical considerations to societal impacts. As difficult as it may be, policymakers must stay ahead, understanding AI's nuances to craft responsive, effective policies for a balanced AI-driven future.

In his speech "Will Fintech Make the World a Better Place?", Prof. Donald Low remarked, that the program encourages YGLs to delve into the ethical nuances of AI's influence on human society. They are urged to think critically about policy-making strategies within an innovation-driven economy, drawing inspiration from real-world examples in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area.

It is the first time HKUST has hosted the World Economic Forum's Young Global Leaders Development Program. Around 40 influential individuals from the WEF's YGL leadership development program gathered at HKUST.

For more information about the WEF's YGL program at HKUST, please read



The program has also been reported in local media HK01:



**Professor Naubahar Sharif**

Acting Head and Professor of PPOL and  
Co-lead Faculty of the YGL Program



**Professor Donald Low**

Director of Leadership and Public Policy  
Executive Education,  
Professor of Practice of PPOL and  
Co-lead Faculty of the YGL Program

# International Aviation and Business Conference

On 12 and 13 October 2023, the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) hosted the International Aviation and Business Conference (IABC) at the Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS), HKUST, with Prof. Pengyu Zhu, Associate Professor of PPOL and Director of the Center for Applied Social and Economic Research (CASER), as the Conference Executive Chair. This conference was co-organized with CASER, Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Commission (HKITC), Hong Kong Aviation Industry Association (HKAIA), and Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA). Over these two days, scholars, stakeholders and representatives from various sectors and different parts of the world gathered at the beautiful campus of HKUST to join this important platform for dialogue and knowledge exchange in aviation technology and business.

In the opening session on the first day of the conference, Prof. WANG Yang, Vice-President for Institutional Advancement, Chair Professor of the Department of IEDA and of Mathematics, Director of the Big Data for Bio Intelligence Laboratory, Associate Director of HKUST BDI, HKUST gave a warm welcome to all the participants, emphasizing that Hong Kong is at a critical juncture to reconnect with the world and HKUST has put great effort and plenty of resources into space technology and sustainability, he foresaw more collaboration through the conference. Mr. LAM Sai-hung GBS, JP, Secretary for Transport and Logistics, HKSAR Government, introduced the role of HKIA, the cutting-edge technology and innovation that the HKIA has implemented by the Airport Authority and Civil Aviation Department, and wished the conference every success. Mrs. Stefanie Seedig, Deputy Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, introduced to the audience the achievement and commitment to green aviation initiated by the German government, especially in zero-emission aircraft, R&D regulations, and its efforts in establishing collaboration with China in the field, and wished all a thought-provoking, inspiring and fruitful conference that would serve as an impetus for new ideas and innovations.



In the keynote speech session, Mr. Duncan Chiu, LegCo Member and President of the Hong Kong Information Technology Joint Council, shared with the audience the topic, “Is Hong Kong’s Aviation Industry Hovering on the Runway to Recovery?” about Hong Kong’s aviation recovery in the post-pandemic era, the future development of Hong Kong’s aviation industry and net zero, indicating that there is an overall recovery of air traffic and cargo business remained strong after the pandemic as Hong Kong ranked number 1 in cargo traffic. He demonstrated how Covid-19 affected the profitability of the world’s most valuable airline companies and introduced the airport-city development strategy and the efficient cross-GBA sea-air cargo transshipment pilot scheme that Hong Kong is building. Prof. Xi Liang, Professor of Sustainable Transitions in Construction and Infrastructure, Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction, UCL, delivered the speech “Carbon Market and Net Zero Transition of Aviation Industry” from the angle of carbon pricing and market and its transition to the aviation industry. He gave an overview of CO<sub>2</sub> emission and per-capita consumption-based CO<sub>2</sub> emission worldwide; and introduced the carbon emission trading system and global carbon pricing and its linkage to energy and



climate policy; he also showcased aviation in the EU emission trading system, the new laws and opportunities to decarbonize and lower carbon emission in the aviation industry by international civil aviation organizations and shared critical issues about carbon offsetting in aviation and potential collaboration opportunities in the GBA.

In the opening session of the second day of the conference, Prof. Huamin Qu, Dean of AIS, Head and Program Director of EMIA, Chair Professor of BDI and CSE, HKUST introduced the background of PPOL and its interdisciplinary positioning to the audience and welcomed conference participants to Hong Kong and HKUST and wished the conference success. Ir. Dr. Angus Cheung, Dean of HKAIA, President and CEO of Aerovision Technology Ltd, introduced HKAIA; he remarked on the business opportunities despite challenges brought by Covid-19 and wished the conference a successful event. Mr. Chris Au Young, General Manager of Innovation and Data Insights, HKIA welcomed the participants and introduced HKIA and its capacity, such as air traffic before the pandemic and its recovery after the pandemic

and the challenges it faces, the new development plan for HKIA under the topic “Redefining Airport Experience with Innovation.”

Prof. Daniel Delahaye, Head of Optimization and Machine Learning Team of the ENAC Research Laboratory, in his keynote speech “An Insight of Machine Learning Algorithms in Optimization-Simulation for Air Traffic Management Operations”, introduced the theoretical background of optimization algorithm, the method of deterministic, stochastic and RRT approaches for evaluating decisions, the role of machine learning and why it works for airport operation and flight control such as predicting taxiway and terminal occupancy. He elaborated on large-scale trajectory planning and how 4D weather, airspace configuration, and other realistic features can be inserted into the simulation process. He shared with the audience the automatic emergency trajectory design, automatic SID-STAR design, airbus, and helicopter noise propagation model; he also remarked on new challenges in simulation in predicting CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction potential cruise altitude and speed optimization.



Prof. Anming Zhang, Professor of Saunderson School of Business, University of British Columbia, in his keynote speech, “Global Airport Connectivity Index: Impact of COVID-19, New Route Assessment, and Future Research”, introduced the connectivity index and its application, he pointed out the susceptible nature of aviation industry to shocks with simultaneous resilience. He demonstrated the application of the connectivity index in classifying airports at the global level, trading, and benchmarking.

Mr. Benjamin Wong, Vice President of Advanced Manufacturing and New Energy Technology, OASES, in his keynote speech “The Tech-enabled Aviation Industry: the 360 Perspectives”, introduced the Office for Attracting Strategic Enterprises (OASES), its role, mission, and collaborators, its policies and schemes to support innovation and research in local universities, research institutes, and industries. He also shared the progress and advancement of aircraft and airport facilities.

There were six focus topics in the Parallel Forum sessions: 1) Airport Technology Evolution, 2) Technology Sharing with Other Industries, 3) Web 3.0 Technology in the Aviation Industry and its Business Opportunities, 4) Technology Adoption and Efficiency Enhancement and Intelligent Logistics, 5) Sustainable Aviation, and 6) Sustainable Fuel and Decarbonization.

Presenters and participants were from local, mainland, and overseas companies including ADP Ingénierie, AFSC Operations, CASL, Cathay Pacific, HACTL, HAECO, HKEX, OpenAirlines, VERESE-AI; local and mainland organizations and governmental departments, including China Communications and Transportation Association, HK International Airport, HKCAD, HKITJC, OASES; and from local, mainland and overseas universities, including Beihang University, ENAC LAB, HKU, HKUST, HKPolyU, HKBU, Tongji University, Tsinghua University, UCL, USTC, Zhejiang University. The two-day conference has proven to be a successful and fruitful knowledge exchange event for all participants.





# Integrating Health and Social Care Services for the Elderly in Asia Conference

On 30 October 2023, scholars, practitioners, and policymakers gathered at the Institute of Advanced Studies, HKUST to join this dynamic platform and address the issues and policy challenges faced by our aging populations under the topic “Integrating Health and Social Care Services for Elderly in Asia: A Scholar-Practitioner-Policymaker Dialogue” Prof. Alex Jingwei He, Associate Professor of PPOL, Acting Director of IPP, HKUST served as the conference chair. Professor Tim K. T Cheng, Vice President (R&D) of HKUST, delivered the welcome speech; the Director of the Asia-Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policies of WHO, Dr. Nima Asgari-Jirhandeh, and Prof. Alex Jingwei He delivered the opening speeches. Prof. He extended a warm welcome to all the participating scholars, practitioners, and policymakers and introduced the theme of the conference.



Prof. Kim K. T. Cheng delivered the welcome speech

Policy scholars and experts from universities and government agencies, all over the world, including countries and regions including mainland China, HKSAR, India, Korea, Japan, Singapore,

## Integrating Health and Social Care Services for the Elderly in Asia: A Scholar-Practitioner-Policymaker Dialogue





Dr. Nima Asgari-Jirhandeh (upper)  
Prof. Alex Jingwei He (lower)  
delivered the opening speech



Taiwan, the UK, the US, the Western Pacific Region, and from local, mainland and overseas universities and organizations, including Peking University, CUHK, HKU, HKUST, Jawaharlal Nehru University, King's College London, Ministry of Health (Singapore), National Health Group (Singapore), Seoul National University, Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research, University of Birmingham, University of Georgia, WHO, and in various disciplines approached the topic, shared their expertise and provided insights in their presentations from angles and perspectives such as health policy, long-term care system, public health service, geriatrics, and social work with elderly in four sessions, and engaged in panel discussions after the individual presentations.

The conference concluded with evident success and proven to be an excellent knowledge exchange event.





## PPOL, HKUST Signs MoU with HKIAAC, ICAC

On 21 February 2024, the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) entered a significant partnership by signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Hong Kong International Academy Against Corruption (HKIAAC) of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). The primary objective of this collaboration is to propel anti-corruption-related academic research and provide personnel training, thus contributing to the national and global endeavours against corruption.

During the ICAC's 50th Anniversary Reception and Establishment Ceremony of the Academy, Acting Head of the Division of PPOL, Professor Naubahar Sharif signed the MoU with Deputy Commissioner and Head of Operations, Mr. Yau Shu-chun. The signing was witnessed by Chief Executive Mr. John Lee, Commissioner of the ICAC Mr. Woo Ying-ming, President of HKUST Professor Nancy Ip, and Provost of HKUST Professor Guo Yike.



According to the MoU, HKIAAC and PPOL will consolidate and enhance cooperation in graft fighting by joint research, organizing academic forums and seminars to exchange data, information and materials related to anti-corruption, sharing experiences, and providing anti-corruption personnel training courses.



# His Excellency Ambassador Khali Hashmi of Pakistan to China Visited PPOL

On 22 February 2024, the Division of PPOL was honoured to welcome His Excellency Ambassador Khali Hashmi of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to China, along with His Excellency Consul General of Pakistan in Hong Kong SAR and Macau SAR Bilal Ahmad Butt Consul, Deputy Consul General Mr Muhammad Amjiad Ahmad, Second Secretary Ms Rabbia Nasir, and Trade Development Officer Mr Ali Awan visiting our division. Professor Naubahar Sharif, Acting Head and Professor of PPOL, and Professor Emily Nason, Associate Professor of Business Education and Director of Undergraduate Recruitment and Admission Office warmly received our distinguished guests.

During the visit, Professor Sharif introduced HKUST and the Division of PPOL to His Excellency, while Professor Nason provided an overview of HKUST's student profile, particularly highlighting opportunities for international students and employment prospects after graduation. Professor Sharif emphasized the Division of PPOL's commitment to deepening links with Pakistani institutions and engaging in collaborative research projects.

Ambassador Khali Hashmi acknowledged the importance of educational opportunities in Hong Kong for Pakistani students and shared Pakistan's experiences in collaboration with other institutions. The discussion also touched upon the unique appeal of Hong Kong as a study



destination and the potential for educational collaboration between Pakistan and international peers.

On behalf of HKUST and the Division of PPOL, Professor Sharif expressed gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Khali Hashmi for his visit and presented him with souvenirs. His Excellency Ambassador presented Professor Sharif with a dual language atlas about Pakistani history and geography.

Following the meeting, a visit to the Shaw Auditorium was conducted, accompanied by HKUST's Pakistani students, and guided by representatives from the Global Engagement and Greater China Affairs Office, culminating in a successful conclusion to the visit.







# SOCIETAL IMPACT

## G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance, World Economic Forum, Geneva

The G20 Global Smart Cities Alliance on Technology Governance collaborates with governments, private-sector partners, and city residents around a shared set of principles for responsible and ethical use of smart city technologies. It establishes global policy norms, accelerates best practices, and fosters public trust. The alliance, with experts worldwide, develops Policy Roadmaps for responsible, ethical smart cities. Currently, 36 pioneer cities have validated the roadmaps, and many are implementing their policies globally.

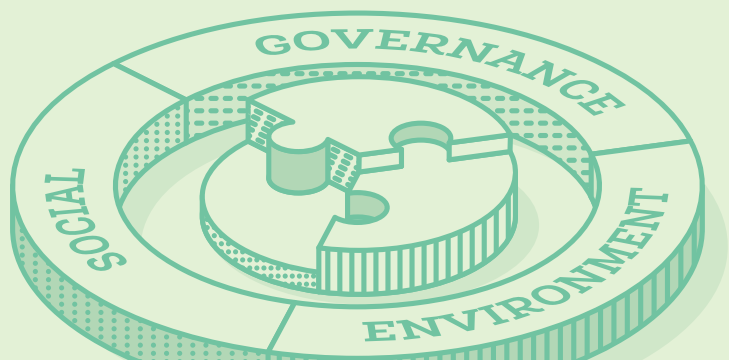


### ***Model Policy - Privacy Impact Assessment (2023)***

Professor Yurime contributed to developing the Model Policy for Privacy Impact Assessment. When deploying innovative smart city technologies, a city needs to work to find a fair balance between gathering information to provide needed services and protecting the public's privacy. He collaborated with the task force members from academia, industry, and government across the globe to develop privacy impact assessments that consist of a set of processes to identify and manage privacy risks throughout the complete data life cycle, from collection through disposal. The PIAs are currently helping smart cities in various countries increase transparency and accountability, support public trust, mitigate potential privacy harms, improve compliance and reduce legal risk, and enable more confident and consistent decision-making about data and technology by city officials, their partners and the public.

### ***Primer for Smart City Public-Private Collaborations (2023)***

Professor Yurime contributed to developing the Primer for Smart City Public-Private Collaborations. As smart city plans need large investments that are difficult to finance with traditional public funds, public private collaborations are a feasible choice for tackling public financing shortages and expenditure reduction. He collaborated with task force members coming from academia, industry, and government to examine the underlying potential for PPCs in a smart city context and address various issues associated with PPCs, from policy considerations to implementation issues. The primer helps key stakeholders in the public and private sectors in smart cities understand the basic structure of a successful PPC policy framework and a full overview of the primary characteristics of PPCs that impact the policy framework's nature. It supports a robust public-private collaboration framework in the digital transformation of infrastructure to increase efficiency, experience, safety, sustainability and resilience.



## **A Global Architecture for Artificial Intelligence, Technical Note, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, New York (2023).**

This Technical Note is an effort to consolidate some of the key questions surrounding global AI governance today, in order to inform the UN's efforts in this domain. It builds out the third recommendation of Shift 6, put forward in the report of the UN's High-Level Advisory Board (HLAB) on Effective Multilateralism, entitled: A Breakthrough for People and the Planet, published in 2023. The recommendation calls for a multilateral agreement on a timeline for a global architecture for AI design, development, and use based on common standards and approaches. This technical note is informed by the workshop held at the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR) in July 2023, which involved over 30 academics and UN thought leaders. Professor Yarime attended the workshop and contributed to the technical note on *A Global Architecture for Artificial Intelligence*

## **The Presidio Recommendations on Responsible Generative AI, World Economic Forum in collaboration with AI Commons (2023).**

On 26-28 April 2023, the summit "Responsible AI Leadership: A Global Summit on Generative AI" took place at the World Economic Forum's Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution based in the Presidio in San Francisco, USA. The event was hosted by the Forum in partnership with AI Commons to guide technical experts and policy-makers on the responsible development and governance of generative AI systems. The summit emphasized the importance of open innovation and international collaboration as essential enablers for responsible generative AI. The focus was on moving beyond insightful discussions to generate actionable and practical recommendations for various AI stakeholders that could significantly influence the design, construction and deployment of generative AI. Over 100 AI thought leaders and practitioners participated in the summit, including chief scientific officers, responsible AI and ethics leads, academic leaders, AI entrepreneurs, policy-makers, tech investors and members of civil society. Participants engaged in discussions on numerous aspects of generative AI's design, development, release and societal impact, and deliberated on key recommendations. Professor Yarime participated in the summit and contributed to the *Presidio Recommendations on Responsible Generative AI*.

## **Hong Kong ESG Reporting Awards (HERA), Hong Kong (2023)**

The Hong Kong ESG Reporting Awards (HERA) recognizes companies that demonstrate commitment at attaining environmental sustainability of their businesses. HERA has been the platform that facilitates transitions to sustainability and leads companies towards best industry ESG practices. HERA covers the overall best ESG report, GRI reporting, ESG governance, positive social and environmental impacts, carbon neutrality, most improved, and best newcomer award. Professor Yarime contributed to assessing ESG reporting of companies as a member of the Judging Panel. He collaborated with the members of the Judging Panel coming from industry and civil society to evaluate the performance of ESG reporting of companies with regard to eight criteria for sustainable business practices. HERA created a network of professionals committed to accelerating the sustainability agenda in Hong Kong, mainland China, and beyond.





# STUDENT AND GRADUATE ACHIEVEMENTS

## PhD Thesis Presentation

### Dr. Shubham Sharma

Supervisor: Professor Kira Matus

Thesis Title: From Strategy to Action: Actors Shaping Sustainability Transitions

This thesis presents a policy-centric view of sustainability transitions, unraveling the dynamics of different actors, strategies, instruments, and their roles in fostering sustainable transitions. It discusses policy strategy, instruments, implementation, and actors. By synthetically studying India's regional electric vehicle (EV) policy, dissecting Austria's ban on incandescent lamps, and spotlighting the role of street-level policy entrepreneurs in India's LED lighting transition, the thesis presents a cohesive narrative on the complexities of sustainability transitions. It underscores the necessity of enhanced coordination among diverse institutions and the pivotal role of capacity development in steering these transitions. It moves beyond theoretical discourse, offering practical insights and recommendations for fostering more effective, inclusive, and impactful societal changes in the realm of sustainable governance.



## PPOL Best Teaching Assistant Award

**Profesor Naubahar Sharif** presenting the Best Teaching Assistant Award to Miss Elizaveta Dorrer

Miss Elizaveta Dorrer was nominated for and won the inaugural PPOL Best Teaching Assistant Award, in recognition of her outstanding contribution and service as a teaching assistant. Elizaveta is a researcher in architecture, urbanism, and emerging technologies, currently a Year 4 PhD student in Public Policy under the supervision of Prof. Masaru Yarime.

The PPOL Best TA Award aims to recognize and motivate TAs and improve teaching quality. The application and nomination for the Best TA apply to all PPOL TAs (including staff, research postgraduate students from PPOL, research postgraduate students from the GZ campus, and research postgraduate students from other departments/divisions who perform TA duties for courses offered by PPOL).



*Congratulations to Elizaveta!*



## Study Trip to Tokyo.....

On 17-20 December 2023, some of our PhD, MPP and MPM students, joined by some MBA students, embarked on a three-day study trip to Tokyo. Led by Professors Donald Low and Alex Jingwei He, the theme of the study trip was "What's so bad about Japanification? Lessons from Japan's Lost Decade". The trip allowed students to examine Japan's lost decades, how it survived nearly two decades of economic stagnation, and the health and social policy reforms introduced in that period. They also had the opportunity to discuss lessons for contemporary China, which is grappling with similar problems summarised by the 4Ds: excessive **d**ebt, **d**eflation, **d**ecline of asset values, and aging **d**emographics.

On the first morning, the students visited Mitsubishi Corporation for a discussion on energy and infrastructure financing in emerging markets, with a view to gaining insights into sustainable infrastructure financing, which is something vital in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). In the afternoon, students visited the Graduate School of Public Policy at Tokyo University to discuss Japan's public sector, financial, and social security reforms in the 2000s. Prof. Naomi Aoki introduced the administrative reforms undertaken by the Japanese government from the late 1990s to



2020; Prof. Yasishi Iwamoto gave a talk on the social security system under low growth, and Prof. Takahiro Hattori spoke on financial market and institutions in Japan. Prof. Low also provided historical insights into Japan's banking system in the 1950s-70s and Japan's lost decades and highlighted parallels with the financial situation in China today.

The following day, students visited Macquarie Group Limited to study Japan's equity market that outperformed in 2023 and prospects in 2024, with a talk delivered by the Head of Japan's Equity Research and Managing Director of Macquarie Group, Mr. Damian Thong. In the afternoon, at the Tokyo Foundation for Policy





Research, students examined and discussed Japan's health policy reforms since the 2000s. Prof. Haruka Sakamoto from Tokyo Women's Medical University shared valuable insights on the social security system for Japan's super-aging population. The day concluded with a visit to Godot Inc., a tech startup specializing in evidence-based policy-making and behavioral design.

On the third day, students engaged in discussions at Waseda University on Japan's lost decades and gained valuable perspectives on possible lessons for China. Professors Tomoo Kikuchi and Kozo Ueda gave incisive and thought-provoking talks.

This study trip provided our students with a broad understanding of Japan's lost decades, allowing them to think comparatively and historically about the current state of the Chinese economy, and the economic and social security reforms necessary for a sustained economic recovery.





## MPP and MPM Students' Participation in GPAI

With the lead of Prof. Masaru Yarime, Associate Professor of PPOL and co-director of the MPP program, our MPP and MPM students participated in the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) and contributed to the AI Observation Platform Report, which was presented to the GPAI New Delhi Summit in December 2023. The report was based on the case studies of enterprises in Hong Kong and mainland China utilizing AI to address sustainability challenges, including renewable energy and environmental protection, and was submitted as material for international discussions at the GPAI.

The Observation Platform of AI at the Workplace Project demonstrates the importance of global collaboration in the realm of AI research and its application in the workforce. It encapsulates diverse perspectives from around the world, each contributing unique insights into how AI is reshaping labor across varied contexts. It is an excellent platform and opportunity for our students to participate in influencing and shaping the AI landscape with a focus on inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and adaptability.



Prof. Masaru Yarime and MPP and MPM Students discussing AI governance with GPAI participants

# Alumni Spotlight

## Prof. Gleb Papyshev

Research Assistant Professor in the Division of Social Science, HKUST

For this Semester, we are glad to have Prof. Gleb Papyshev, a 2023 PhD graduate of PPOL and now Research Assistant Professor in the Division of Social Science at HKUST, to share his success story, views on academic research, and more.

Prof. Papyshev was born in Russia. In his early days, he excelled academically in high school, and when he won the FLEX Fellowship that sponsored him to exchange in the US, it became clear to him that being an academic would be his life-long career, having worked briefly in corporations that he did not enjoy much, reinforced this resolution.

A good academic platform, to Prof. Papyshev, is extremely important and very beneficial to one's career in the academe; he appreciates the way HKUST supports students, which allows students to focus on research and spare them finding means to sustain themselves (part-time jobs for instance) while doing PhD degrees. He said Hong Kong is internationally well-connected in academic activities that expose young scholars to top-notch research and provide them opportunities to learn from the best examples, which cannot be easily found elsewhere.

He is appreciative of the PhD program offered by PPOL, which exposed him to a unique study experience; he pointed out that public policy is one of a few non-western-centric disciplines in social science that has the feature of not being dominated by the study of Western Europe and the US, as there are a wide variety of studies in China, Japan, India, etc. The interdisciplinary and all-encompassing nature of public policy, both in terms of the topics of investigation and the methodologies: qualitative, quantitative, computational, and a mixture of methods, is equally accepted in the academic community of public policy. To him, research in public policy



means extra intellectual freedom, as the discipline has no embedded rigid hierarchy, unlike sociology, political science, or economics. He remarked that faculty and students of PPOL can be from distinctively different fields and backgrounds, and they are all able to work in the field of public policy from different angles and perspectives. Prof. Papyshev found that his research projects in PPOL enabled him to contribute to the field and gave him a sense of achievement during his days as a research student. The opportunity of working as a teaching assistant in PPOL made him exposed to various public policy topics, and he quickly familiarized himself with the field during his PhD study, though challenging in the beginning.

For a piece of advice to PhD students, Prof. Papyshev emphasized the importance of a healthy social life and setting boundaries between professional and personal roles for mental health, which will, in turn, positively impact one's academic life. He encourages students to pursue topics they are truly interested in, disregarding the topics' popularity, and this should be the basis of research throughout one's academic career.





## More about Prof. Gleb Papyshev

Prof. Papyshev did his PhD in the Division of PPOL, HKUST, under the supervision of Prof. Masaru Yarime from 2019-2023, his research interests include AI policy and regulation, AI ethics, and corporate governance mechanisms for emerging technologies; he has published extensively in high-impact international peer-reviewed journals and books, such as *Policy Design and Practice*, *AI & Society*, *Data & Policy*, and *Elgar Companion to Regulating AI and Big Data in Emergent Economies*; he has won numerous awards while doing his PhD study in PPOL, including the prestigious Hong Kong PhD Fellowship, the Oxford Russia Fellowship, the Hong Kong Design Trust Seed Grant, and the Strelka Institute Fellowship.







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