

# CONFERENCES AND EVENTS



## Public Policy Dialogue Series 2024 – 2025

### Is Hong Kong's Population Policy Working? Coping with Demographic Challenges and Attracting Talent

On January 18, 2025, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Division of Public Policy (HKUST) and the Education University of Hong Kong co-organized a significant event in their Public Policy Dialogue Series titled “Is Hong Kong’s Population Policy Working? Coping with Demographic Challenges and Attracting Talent.” The conference brought together experts to discuss the critical demographic issues facing Hong Kong and explore effective policy responses.

The event was moderated by Associate Professor Alex He Jingwei from HKUST, who guided the discussions and facilitated engaging dialogues among the speakers.

Professor Anthony Cheung, a leading figure in public administration and former Secretary for Transport and Housing, opened the conference with a comprehensive overview of the evolution of Hong Kong’s population policy. He highlighted the formation of a task force in 2002 and subsequent policy reviews in 2007 and 2012, emphasizing the need for continuous adaptation to changing demographics. The establishment of the Human Resources Planning Commission in 2018 was also noted as a key development aimed at consolidating government and sectoral efforts to support a diversified economy.

A central theme of the conference was the demographic challenges currently facing Hong Kong. The elderly population (aged 65 and over) is projected to rise from 20.5% in 2021 to 36% by 2046, while the total fertility rate has significantly declined. This trend raises concerns about a shrinking workforce and



potential brain drain, as many young, skilled residents seek opportunities abroad.

The discussions also underscored the importance of health and quality of life. Although life expectancy is increasing, disparities in health outcomes, particularly among vulnerable populations, remain a pressing issue. The need for a comprehensive approach to healthcare and social services was emphasized, especially given the increasing dependency ratio.

The conference featured a series of presentations from esteemed speakers, including Professor Paul Yip, Professor Lui Tai-lok, Dr. Wendy Hong Wen, and Professor Tang Heiwai. They introduced strategic initiatives from the current administration (2022-27), such as expanding talent admission schemes, enhancing labor importation programs in essential sectors, and implementing family-friendly measures to foster a supportive environment for childbearing.

The event concluded with a call for public engagement and transparent policymaking to effectively address these complex demographic issues. By integrating diverse perspectives and fostering collaboration, the conference highlighted the urgency of innovative solutions to secure a sustainable future for Hong Kong amidst significant demographic shifts.

Overall, this conference served as a crucial platform for dialogue, focusing on the challenges and opportunities within Hong Kong’s population policy framework.

## Public Policy Dialogue Series 2024 – 2025

### Lessons in Policy Delivery: Waste Disposal Charging, Online Car Hailing, and Mega Events

This session of the Policy Dialogue Series 2024-25 featured a diverse panel of experts discussing key issues in Hong Kong’s policy landscape. The event was moderated by Assistant Professor Benjamin Steuer from HKUST, who facilitated the dialogue and ensured a productive exchange of ideas.

Professor Anthony B. L. Cheung opened the discussion by emphasizing the importance of effective policy delivery in enhancing governance capacity and public trust. He addressed the challenges faced by the Hong Kong government, highlighting issues such as legislative gridlock and over-politicization. Cheung stressed that successful governance requires not only strategic planning but also the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and engage various stakeholders.

Professor Lui Tai-lok focused on the implications of organizing mega events in Hong Kong. He acknowledged the government’s efforts to rejuvenate the city’s image post-COVID-19 through such events but questioned their long-term effectiveness. Tai-lok argued that while it is essential to attract visitors, the quality and distinctiveness of these events should be prioritized to ensure they contribute meaningfully to the city’s reputation and economic recovery.

Dr. Kay Lam Chi-yan discussed the critical role of policy review in the current governance environment. She highlighted the importance of learning from past policy mistakes and emphasized the need for a structured approach to evaluation. Lam proposed the establishment of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of policies, advocating for a system that encourages continuous improvement and accountability.



Professor Christine Loh tackled the issue of waste disposal charging, emphasizing the “polluters pay” principle. She pointed out the necessity of public understanding and consensus for successful implementation. Loh warned that community opposition and legislative controversies could hinder progress, stressing the importance of transparent communication and stakeholder engagement to build support for waste management initiatives.

Mr. Bernard Chan addressed the regulatory challenges surrounding online car-hailing services like Uber. He discussed the tension between traditional taxi services and new entrants in the sharing economy. Chan advocated for a balanced regulatory framework that encourages innovation while ensuring fair competition, highlighting the need for policies that adapt to technological advancements and changing consumer expectations.

Throughout the dialogue, the speakers collectively emphasized the importance of governance and policy delivery in addressing contemporary challenges in Hong Kong. They underscored the need for transparency, accountability, and effective communication in building public trust.

The event provided a platform for exchanging insights and best practices in policy delivery. The discussions highlighted the significance of active stakeholder engagement and collaboration in achieving successful policy outcomes. The dialogue concluded with a shared commitment to fostering a more inclusive and responsive governance framework that can effectively address the community’s needs while promoting sustainable development in Hong Kong.



## Managing Disruptive Technologies and Platform Economy: Labor Market and Social Policy Implications

On February 14, 2025, the Division of Public Policy (PPOL), in collaboration with the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), the Institute for Emerging Market Studies (IEMS), the Institute for Public Policy (IPP), and EY, organized a pivotal conference titled “Managing Disruptive Technologies and Platform Economy: Labor Market and Social Policy Implications.” This event brought together a diverse group of policymakers, practitioners, and scholars to examine the profound effects of emerging technologies on labor markets and social policies.

The conference commenced with an inspiring opening ceremony featuring distinguished speakers. Dr. Alex Jingwei He, Acting Director of the Institute for Public Policy and Associate Professor at PPOL, welcomed attendees and emphasized the necessity of interdisciplinary collaboration in addressing the challenges posed by disruptive technologies.

The first panel session, moderated by Professor Bert Shi, showcased influential voices in the field. The panelists included Professor Albert Park, Chief Economist at the Asian Development Bank, Dr. Hon Wendy Wen Hong, a member of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Professor Yike Guo, Provost and Chair Professor of Computer Science and Engineering at HKUST, and Mr. Chris Leung, Partner in Financial Services Technology Consulting at Ernst & Young Advisory Services Limited. They discussed the implications of technological advancements on labor dynamics and the urgent need for adaptive regulatory frameworks.

As the conference progressed, Professor Naubahar Sharif, Head of the Division of Public Policy, led a captivating session on the landscape of labor markets in the context of new technologies. His expertise guided discussions on migration and labor



adjustments, encouraging participants to consider innovative solutions for the challenges ahead. Professor Donald Low, Director of Leadership and Public Policy Executive Education Programs, moderated a session focused on regulatory and policy responses. His insights were instrumental in addressing the complexities faced by platform workers and the necessity for effective policy interventions.

In the final session, Dr. Alex Jingwei He returned to facilitate discussions on welfare policy and social protection, highlighting the critical role of gender considerations in labor market policies. Participants engaged in meaningful conversations about creating inclusive policies that address the unique challenges faced by women in the platform economy.

This conference was a significant step in advancing the conversation around technology and public policy, showcasing the Division of Public Policy’s commitment to fostering these essential dialogues. As we move forward, PPOL will continue to collaborate with experts across various fields to shape effective policies for a rapidly changing future.



## Forum: The Belt and Road Initiative: Multi-disciplinary Perspectives from Academia and Government

On November 28, 2024, the Policy Forum on The Belt and Road Initiative: Multi-disciplinary Perspectives from Academia and Government took place at Wynn Palace, commemorating the 25th Anniversary of Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST). Co-organized by the Division of Public Policy at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the event attracted over 200 participants, including esteemed government officials and academic leaders.

Professor Naubahar Sharif, Head of the Division of Public Policy, expertly moderated a roundtable discussion that featured notable speakers such as Chair Professor Zhiwu Chen, Chair Professor James Z. Lee, and Chair Professor Francis T. Lui. The forum provided a platform for discussing the diverse impacts of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) on global and regional development. Topics included the economic significance of the BRI, opportunities for technological advancements, and the role of education in fostering international collaboration.

The forum kicked off with a keynote address from Mr. Liu Xianfa, the Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He emphasized the BRI's evolution from concept to action, highlighting its role as a catalyst for international cooperation and shared benefits among participating countries.

Discussions also delved into specific challenges and opportunities presented by the BRI. For instance, the potential for leveraging the initiative for technological upgrading and development opportunities for countries like Pakistan was explored. The speakers provided insights into how Macau, as a unique bridge between China and Portuguese-speaking nations, can capitalize on its strategic advantages to enhance its role within the BRI framework.

The event concluded with remarks from Professor of Practice Tong Ka Lok, who summarized the key takeaways and expressed hope for the continued development of the BRI with a focus on quality and sustainability. This forum marks a significant step toward fostering collaboration between academia and government in navigating the complexities of the BRI.



## “One Hour for Young Talents” Winter 2024 Workshop at HKUST

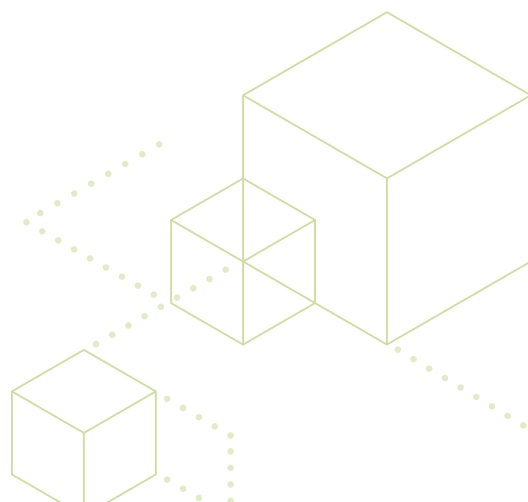


The “One Hour for Young Talents” Winter 2024 Workshop, jointly organized by the China Public Administration Review (C-PAR), the Division of Public Policy (PPOL) and the Institute for Public Policy (IPP) at HKUST, was successfully held on December 20-21, 2024 on the HKUST Clear Water Bay campus.

The “One Hour for Young Talents” Workshop is a prominent series within the Chinese public policy research community. It provides young scholars with a distinguished platform for in-depth discussion on their paper with senior scholars.

The Workshop commenced with welcome remarks delivered by Prof SHARIF Naubahar, Head of PPOL at HKUST, and Prof HE Alex Jingwei, Acting Director of IPP at HKUST. Prof MEI Ciqi, Associate and Managing Editor of C-PAR and Associate Professor of the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University, gave opening remarks, followed by immersive discussion sessions for papers from Tsinghua University, Renmin University of China, HKUST, HKUST (GZ), and several other leading universities, which were selected out of over 150 submitted papers.

PPOL and IPP are proud to co-host the workshop with C-PAR and will continue to foster and nurture the new generation of scholars.



## Fiscal Decentralization, Political Regimes, and Land Development

The Division of Public Policy at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, together with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Shenzhen) and the School of Architecture at Harbin Institute of Technology (Shenzhen), successfully organized an academic seminar titled “Fiscal Decentralization, Political Regimes, and Land Development” on December 13, 2024. This event aimed to explore the pivotal role of fiscal decentralization in the realms of regional development, social welfare, public service delivery, land development, and public debt management, particularly within the context of the Greater Bay Area.

The seminar featured prominent speakers, including Prof. Christine Wong from the National University of Singapore. In her keynote address, “Reaching the Tipping Point: Public Finance in China Thirty Years after the Tax-Sharing System Reform,” she examined the intricate dynamics of fiscal decentralization over the past three decades, highlighting its implications for land development and institutional frameworks. Prof. Jieming Zhu from Tongji University provided insights into the speculative property bubble in Shanghai, discussing the shifts in state regimes and their impact on real estate markets.

Additionally, Prof. Ran Tao analyzed the “China Model of Growth,” emphasizing its significance for policy formulation and regional strategies. Prof. Qiang Ren explored the historical evolution of intergovernmental fiscal relationships in China, while Prof. Weiwen Zhang addressed the role of land financialization in reshaping central-local dynamics.

The afternoon sessions showcased emerging scholars who presented innovative research on urban development and regional inequality, employing advanced technologies such as machine learning to propose effective policy solutions. Key topics discussed included the impact of fiscal decentralization on economic growth, government debt risks, innovative revenue structures during land development, urban debt risk management, and sustainable tax policies.

The event not only fostered robust academic exchanges but also encouraged collaborative research, with attendees expressing interest in contributing to the Asian Public Policy journal. Concluding remarks highlighted the seminar’s success in creating a unique platform for interdisciplinary dialogue, offering valuable insights into the complex relationships among fiscal decentralization, institutional mechanisms, and land development in contemporary contexts.



## PPOL Career Talk-The Career Playbook: Tips and Insights from Policy Professionals

We recently hosted an engaging career talk titled “The Career Playbook: Tips and Insights from Policy Professionals,” featuring three dynamic mid-career policy professionals from leading think tanks and major corporations. Attendees had a unique opportunity to connect with industry leaders right here at the Clear Water Bay campus and gain invaluable insights into the world of public policy.

During the inspiring session, our esteemed speakers shared their personal journeys, offering practical tips on effectively balancing study and work, honing internship skills, navigating the job-hunting landscape, and strategically planning career development. They delved into their experiences conducting real-world policy analysis, providing a behind-the-scenes look at the challenges and triumphs faced in the field.

Participants left equipped with knowledge and skills essential for excelling in their future careers. The talk was both informative and motivating, enhancing professional journeys and fostering valuable networking opportunities.



### About the Speakers

#### Ms. Suki Han

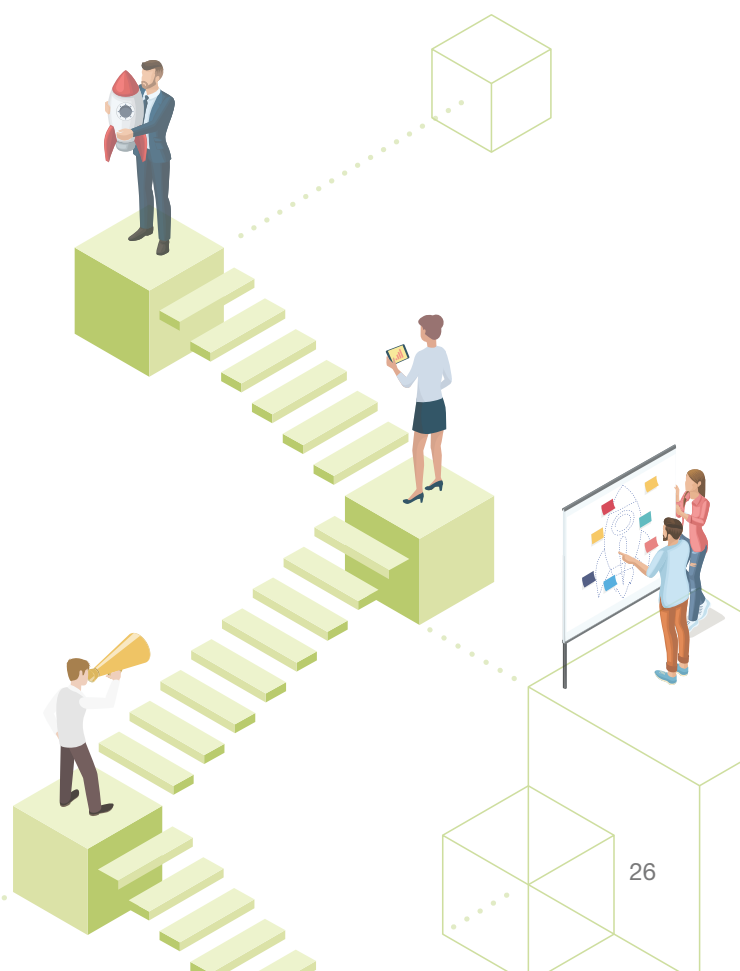
Assistant Manager, Policy & Research,  
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Master of Environmental Management,  
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#### Mr. Dicky Chow

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The University of Hong Kong  
Master in Psychology, The Chinese University of  
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#### Mr. Hui Zeng

Director of Policy and Strategy Research,  
Autonomous Delivery Department, Meituan  
Master of Public Management, Tsinghua University  
EMBA, City University of Hong Kong





# Seminar Archive

**Topic**

**Speakers**

**Summary of talk**

From the Minister's Desk to the Lecture Hall: Reflections on Social and Health Policy Making in South Korea and Hong Kong



**Professor Sophia Siu-chee Chan**  
(陳肇始 教授)

Professor Sophia Siu-chee Chan (陳肇始 教授) served as the Secretary for Food and Health for the Hong Kong SAR Government from 2017 to 2022, becoming the first nurse in Hong Kong to be appointed to this ministerial position.

In a recent seminar, two distinguished female scholars shared their experiences navigating academia and government, having held ministerial positions in South Korea and Hong Kong SAR. They engaged in a discussion on critical social and health policy issues impacting these Asian tiger economies, allowing ample time for questions and dialogue.



**Professor Sophia Seung-yoon Lee**  
(李承潤 教授)

Professor Sophia Seung-yoon Lee (李承潤 教授) is a former Vice Chairperson of the Presidential Committee on Youth Policy Coordination (a ministerial appointment) in the Prime Minister's Office of the Republic of Korea.

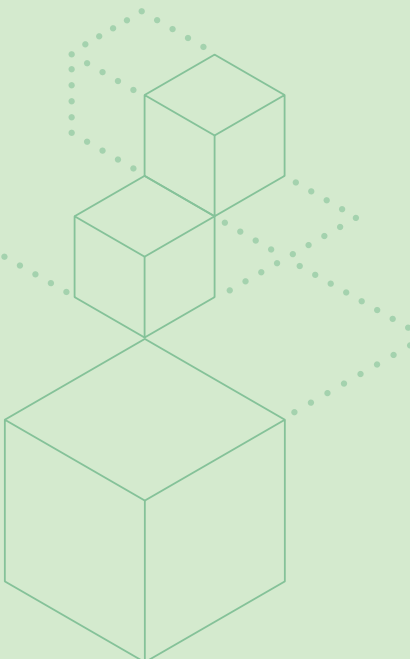
Global Health



**Professor Mark Jit**

Professor and Chair of the Department of Global and Environmental Health at New York University. He also holds honorary appointments at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), the University of Hong Kong (HKU), and the National University of Singapore (NUS)

Prof. Mark Jit briefly discussed the current state of the field of global health in today's changing and uncertain world. He also talked about some of the challenges and opportunities facing an academic global health department, using NYU's recently established department as an example.



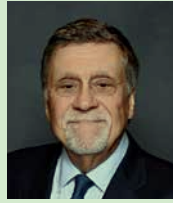
Topic	Speakers	Summary of talk
<p>Reaching the Tipping Point: Public Finance in China Thirty Years After the Tax-sharing System Reform</p>	 <p><b>Professor Christine Wong</b> Visiting Research Professor at the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore and the Bank of America Merrill Lynch Visiting Chair Professor in International Finance for the Schwarzman Scholars Program at Tsinghua University</p>	<p>In this talk, the speaker addressed the severe strain on local government finances due to collapsing land revenues, a looming debt crisis, and declining fiscal positions. Emphasizing that these issues are structural, she advocates for systemic reforms in public finance rather than merely adjusting local government behaviors.</p>
<p>Unveiling Money Illusion: Insights from Experimental Economics</p>	 <p><b>Professor Helena Chytilova</b> Associate Professor at Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic</p>	<p>In the seminar, she discussed how the concept of money illusion, once dismissed, has gained attention in behavioral economics. It impacts various markets and decision-making, despite central banks' efforts to enhance economic literacy. Her research explores whether economic education can mitigate money illusion's effects on coordination failures and market equilibrium.</p>
<p>Policy Implications of Skill Changes under Digital Automation: A Processual Approach</p>	 <p><b>Mr. Jack XING</b> PhD Candidate in Sociology (Graduate Certificate in Public Policy), Georgia Institute of Technology</p>	<p>He discussed a processual approach to understanding skill changes driven by Industry 4.0 and 5.0. It emphasized the need for policy interventions to support frontline workers, highlighting the importance of establishing new skill standards, enhancing algorithm transparency, and promoting recognition of emotional and digital skills in service work.</p>
<p>Leadership and Public Policy Seminar - Asian Economies: History, Institutions and Structure</p>	 <p><b>Professor Jamus Lim</b> Economist at ESSEC Business School (Singapore campus)</p>	<p>The seminar, led by Professor Jamus Lim, explored the histories, institutions, and structures of Asian economies, focusing on contrasts between China, India, and Japan. It addressed the region's rise, challenges post-COVID-19, and future prospects within the political economy landscape.</p>
<p>Authoritarian Markets: The Boom and Busts of China's Local State Banks</p>	 <p><b>Dr. Adam LIU</b> Assistant Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy National University of Singapore</p>	<p>In this talk, Dr. Adam Liu discussed his book project, "Authoritarian Markets: The Boom and Busts of China's Local State Banks." He argues that elite bargaining and bureaucratic mobilizations, rather than "limited government" or "good governance," underpin China's markets, explaining both past prosperity and current economic challenges.</p>

**Topic**

**Speakers**

**Summary of talk**

Leadership and Public Policy Seminar - Anxiety Culture: The New Global State of Human Affairs



**Professor John Allegrante**  
Professor of Health Behavior and Education at Columbia University

The seminar explored anxiety as a pervasive cultural phenomenon in the 21st century, addressing issues like climate change, extremism, and technological advancements. He highlighted how these anxieties shape societal behaviors and influence policymaking globally.

Editor's Wisdom: Advice for PhD Students and Young Researchers



**Professor Ben Martin**  
University of Sussex

The seminar provided insights into recent trends in publishing within innovation studies. It covered the peer review process for PhD students and the advantages of co-authoring with senior academics. Discussions included manuscript submissions from various regions, the influence of AI on publishing, and emerging themes relevant to early researchers.

