



## **Press Release – For Immediate Release**

To: Assignment Editor/Editor of Education and Local News Sections

17 July 2026

### **Scholars worldwide explore pathways for social policy innovation at HSUHK conference**

Over 200 scholars and policy researchers from 121 prestigious institutions worldwide gathered at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) for the 2026 EASP Annual Conference on 17 and 18 July 2026 to explore pathways for social policy innovation in an era of intensifying crises.

Organised by the Graduate School of HSUHK in collaboration with the East Asian Social Policy (EASP) Research Network, the Conference was convened under the theme “Social Policy in Asia in an Era of Multiple Disruptions”, with more than 195 papers presented and five panel sessions held across 16 thematic streams.

At its core, the Conference addressed a pressing global concern: the growing tendency of contemporary societies to prioritise economic and instrumental goals at the expense of the human dimension of development. It sought to re-centre policy conversations on people, values, equity, and the broader purpose of progress in a rapidly evolving world.

The opening ceremony was officiated by Dr the Honourable Ko Wing-man, Chairman of the Social Welfare Advisory Committee of the HKSAR Government; Mr Edward To Wing-hang, the Director of Social Welfare of the HKSAR Government; Professor Kim Bo-yung, Chairman of EASP; and Professor Joshua Mok, Provost and Vice-President (Academic and Research) of HSUHK.

At his officiating speech, Dr the Honourable Ko Wing-man said, “The East Asian context offers valuable lessons here. While our societies differ, we share cultural traditions that emphasise family responsibility, community solidarity, respect for older persons, and collective well-being. This provides a strong foundation for policy innovation. At the same time, we must adapt these traditions to the contemporary realities of changing demographics and social expectations. This is precisely why conferences like today’s are so important. They bring together policymakers, practitioners, and researchers for meaningful, cross-disciplinary dialogue. Academic research provides evidence, community practitioners contribute practical insights, and government leaders help translate these ideas into policy. Innovation flourishes when these perspectives converge.”

Mr Edward To, the Director of Social Welfare, delivered a keynote speech for the conference to elaborate the targeted poverty alleviation strategy of the HKSAR Government in supporting and empowering those most in need in the society, thereby fostering a greater sense of achievement, belonging and satisfaction among grassroots families.

A core highlight of the opening day was the Roundtable Forum titled “Reimagining Care and Resilience: Policy Innovations for Ageing Societies in Hong Kong and East Asia”, where panellists



Professor Cecilia Chan Lai-wan, Emeritus Professor of the University of Hong Kong; Dr Fan Ning, Founder of Health in Action; Dr Qian Jiwei, Senior Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore; and Professor Joshua Mok engaged in an in-depth discussion on institutional innovations, cross-border care models and resilience strategies for rapidly ageing societies.

The exchange was further enriched by three keynote presentations from world-renowned academics. Professor M Ramesh, Professor and UNESCO Chair on Social Policy Design in Asia at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, spoke on “Beyond Universal Health Coverage in Ageing Asia: Reorganising Health Systems for Chronic and Long-term Care”. Professor John Hudson, Dean of the School for Business and Society at the University of York, examined how social policy teaching and curricula have evolved across the UK and East Asian universities. Professor Choi Young-jun, Professor in the Department of Public Policy and Management at Yonsei University, presented “Toward a Post-Scarcity Welfare State: AI, Redistribution, and the Politics of Serenity.

The 2026 EASP Annual Conference was co-organised by the Department of Applied Social Sciences of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the School of Transdisciplinary Studies and the Centre for Public Policy Research of HSUHK.

For further details, please visit the official conference webpage at <https://gs.hsu.edu.hk/en/easp-2026>.

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#### Photos:



Photo 1: (From left) Professor Kim Bo-yung, Mr Edward To, Dr the Honourable Ko Wing-man, and Professor Joshua Mok, officiate at the opening ceremony.



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Photo 2: Dr Chan Chi-kit (right) moderates the first Roundtable Forum. Alongside speakers, (from left) Professor Joshua Mok; Professor Cecilia Chan; Dr Fan Ning, Founder of Health in Action; and Dr Qian Jiwei, Senior Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore, all speakers engage in an in-depth discussion on institutional innovations, cross-border care models and resilience strategies for rapidly ageing societies.

**Photos Download:** [Link](#)

### **About The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong**

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK) is a non-profit private liberal-arts-oriented university with six Schools (Business, Communication, Decision Sciences, Humanities and Social Science, Translation and Foreign Languages, and Transdisciplinary Studies), and over 7,000 full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students. With its unique “Liberal + Professional” education model, HSUHK nurtures young talent with critical thinking, innovative minds, caring attitudes, moral values and social responsibility.

Aspiring to be a leading private university in the region, HSUHK prioritises stellar undergraduate education, top-quality faculty members, award-winning green campus facilities, innovative degree programmes, a unique residential college system that combines living and learning, interactive small-class teaching, close student-teacher relationships, impactful research, and excellent student development and support services.

HSUHK has earned various international recognitions. In the AppliedHE’s ALL ASIA Private University Ranking 2026, it secured 7th place in China. HSUHK ranked 24th in Social Sciences and Humanities and 23rd in both Business and Management and Economics and Finance among China’s top universities in the Research.com Top Universities and Top Scientists Rankings 2026. The MSc in Global Supply Chain Management programme achieved 84th place globally in the QS International



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Trade Rankings 2025. Additionally, HSUHK's School of Business obtained AACSB International accreditation in 2023, a mark of excellence held by only 6% of the world's leading business schools. HSUHK was also ranked among the top 200 worldwide on "Quality Education" and "Decent Work and Economic Growth" in the Times Higher Education University Impact Rankings 2021.