

APRIL
2024

ISUS NEWSLETTER

International School of Urban Sciences
University of Seoul

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Ms. Elena Kountoura, member of the European Parliament and a leading advocate for sustainable tourism, recently delivered a keynote speech at the 87th ISUS Urban Infra Forum on March 25. Her speech resonated with the ethos of the ISUS, emphasizing sustainability, responsible action, and global citizenship.

“It is important to adopt sustainable tourism practices to ensure that our travels have a positive impact on both the environment and the communities we visit”

She emphasized that sustainable tourism extends beyond conventional sightseeing; it's about experiencing the world in a way that respects our planet, its people, and its cultures.

“Increased investment in sustainable infrastructure is needed, such as renewable energy projects and eco-friendly transportation options, to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism”

Additionally, she emphasized the importance of involving local communities in tourism planning and decision-making, along with the significance of preserving cultural heritage sites and natural landscapes to ensure a sustainable future for the tourism industry. The discussion also addressed the potential economic benefits that accompany the promotion of responsible tourism practices.

Her insights are particularly valuable as countries around the world grapple with the challenges of climate change and overtourism.



“What direction should water management policies take in the era of climate crisis and carbon neutrality?”

To explore possible answers, MGLEP students visited the 2024 WATER KOREA to grasp emerging trends in the water industry and examine strategies to boost exports and international cooperation for Korean water companies.

A group of students studying environmental policy at ISUS went on a faculty-led study trip to Daejeon on March 22-23. They delved into the exposition held at the Daejeon Convention Center (DCC) and meticulously examined 166 companies and organizations across 505 booths in the water industry.

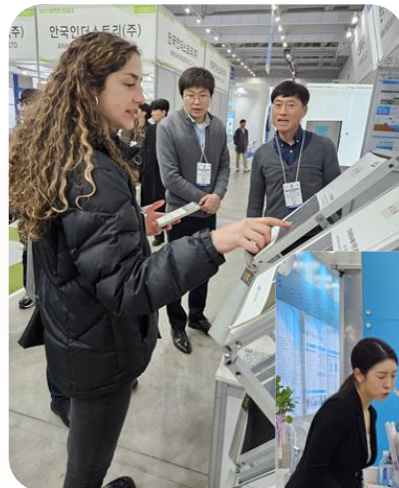
The Expo was hosted by the Korea Water and Wastewater Works Association and Daejeon Metropolitan City, with sponsorship from the Ministry of Environment and numerous other public and private entities.

Under the theme of “Cooperation for a World of Clear Water,” the association curated a special exhibition called the ‘Export Company Pavilion’, showcasing companies with notable overseas sales records in the industry.

During their 2-day excursion, the students focused on observing these companies and learning about cutting-edge technologies in the environmental industry, particularly in water supply and wastewater management.

ISUS MGLEP aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for effective adaptation to and mitigation of environmental changes. This involves providing access to advanced technologies, exemplary practices, and policies, among other things.

Through this experience, students recognized the importance of effective sewage treatment technology in sustainable urban and regional development and explored the possibility of introducing such advanced technology into their own country in the future.



On March 13, the 86th Urban Infra Forum, hosted by ISUS, shed light on Korea's thriving State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs). The event provided an insightful exploration of the management systems and transformation efforts within Korea's crucial state-owned sector.

Under the guidance of Dr. Jhungsoo Park, professor of Public Policy at Ewha Womans University, attendees delved into the realm of SOEs, examining budget dynamics, asset management, and employment impacts. Dr. Park's insights showcased the innovative strategies deployed by the Korean Government to rejuvenate and modernize these pivotal enterprises.

A particularly fascinating topic was Korea's effective system for monitoring State-Owned Enterprises, ensuring robust cash flows while managing high-cost infrastructure. Dr. Park elaborated on Korea's meticulous approach to financial oversight, emphasizing transparency and accountability in handling public funds. This robust system has empowered SOEs to navigate complex challenges while maintaining financial stability and operational efficiency.

Entitled "The State-Owned Enterprises: Korea's Economic Backbone," the forum also provided a glimpse into Korea's economic evolution. Through engaging discussions and expert insights, participants gained valuable knowledge about the inner workings of Korea's State-Owned Enterprises and their broader impact on the nation's economy.

Beyond the educational aspect, the forum served as a vibrant platform for networking and collaboration among urban enthusiasts and industry professionals, including the participants for the ISUS' new 5-month training program GULP (Global Urban Leaders Program).





As Ramadan begins, Muslims worldwide embark on a journey of spiritual renewal and introspection. For the diverse community of ISUS students, Ramadan holds special significance, especially for those away from their families.

Observed from March 12 to April 9 this year, Ramadan is a time of fasting, prayer, and self-discipline for Muslims. It fosters heightened spirituality and communal solidarity, with families and communities coming together to honor this tradition.

For ISUS' international Muslim students, separated from their families, the school community becomes their second family. Here, in an atmosphere of harmony and support, they find solace and companionship as they observe fasting and perform 'Tarawih Salah' together. These are special prayers performed after the daily obligatory prayers during Ramadan.

The spirit of unity shines during Iftar gatherings, where Muslim students break their fasts alongside friends. Laughter and joy abound as students from diverse backgrounds unite, embracing Ramadan through shared experiences and mutual respect.

As Ramadan draws to a close, ISUS students eagerly await Eid al-Fitr on April 10, the festive celebration marking its end. The day begins with Eid Salah, followed by a joyful feast where students gather to enjoy traditional dishes and exchange warm greetings.

Ramadan at ISUS reflects the school's commitment to inclusivity, understanding, and cultural appreciation. In this supportive environment, students create lasting memories and form friendships, making ISUS truly feel like a home away from home.



After completing his studies, Jaehyuk joined GS Engineering & Construction, where he worked in overseas power business. Currently, he is responsible for manufacturing, sales, installation, and maintenance of elevators under the Zeit brand in Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam.

Based on his construction experience, running a manufacturing business in Vietnam has been challenging. However, with the help and encouragement from many people, he and his team are gradually increasing brand recognition in the Vietnamese market.

Q1. Could you tell us about the process that led to the current scale of your business in Vietnam, which you oversee?

“To get something you never had, You have to do something you never did.”

This phrase, which was deeply ingrained in my mind at the beginning of the business, has shaped today's Zeit Elevator. Currently, we have grown into a company with about 200 local employees and an annual revenue of 30 billion KRW.

Starting a business in Vietnam, where elevator infrastructure is not well-developed, was not easy. Now, we operate the first EV manufacturing factory with a 100m high test tower in Vietnam. Despite challenging market conditions in 2023, we ranked the second position in market share.

Thanks to the know-how and lessons learned from existing Korean companies, we were able to have a soft landing in Viet Nam. In this process, I once again realized the importance of personal networking.

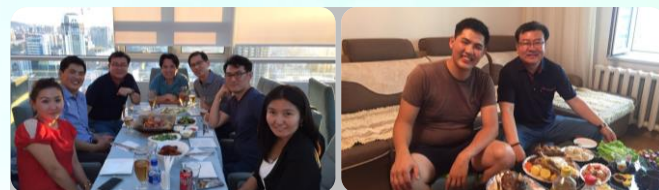
Q2. Could you share a particularly rewarding interaction you had with fellow alumni, professors, and external stakeholders during your work in Vietnam and explain why it was meaningful to you?

Vietnam is one of the fastest-growing countries in Southeast Asia, consistently recording an annual economic growth rate of over 6%, except during the COVID-19 period. In major cities like Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi, luxury apartment prices have surged to the extent that they exceed \$7,000 to \$8,000 per square meter.

In response to this situation, the Vietnamese government has focused on social housing and related policies. To support this initiative, a meeting was held in Ho Chi Minh with Professor Park Jun, Ahn Junsang (GCM 4) from HAN-A Urban Research Institute, and officials from the Korea Land & Housing Institute (LH) and Korea Research Institute for Human Settlements (KRIHS) to discuss the



Work Life in Vietnam



ISUS Life

"Proposal for Vietnam's Social Housing Policy Development" project funded by KOICA.

"This kind of discussion and exchange stays in my mind as it aligns exactly with the vision of ISUS, which aims to be at the forefront of sharing Korea's successful urban development policies and cases with partner countries and advancing urban policies through exchanges between domestic and international public officials."

Q3. You mentioned that research and experiences at ISUS have been instrumental in entering and progressing in your current field. Could you elaborate on the courses or experiences that have laid the foundation for the key tasks you are currently performing?

"My experience at ISUS involved condensing complex, long-term projects into concise results within a short timeframe, followed by discussion and review, which was incredibly meaningful for me."

When I first arrived in Vietnam, the business plans I received mainly focused on local market analysis, business development strategies, and break-even point (BEP) analysis. These are areas that engineering majors like myself often lack familiarity with.

Professor Park Hyeon's Feasibility Study course provided the foundation for establishing and adapting initial business strategies as needed.

Furthermore, Professor Lee Shin's Urban Regeneration course introduced me to a new paradigm. The case studies discussed in the class exemplified a departure from conventional thinking and highlighted the adoption of flexibility to implement groundbreaking methods for urban environmental improvement.

Personally, this prompted me to contemplate various approaches to enhancing urban environments.

Q4. It seems like you continuously develop your professional field through ongoing interactions with fellow ISUS alumni and find it fulfilling. In this regard, I'm curious about what ISUS means to you.

Initially, I was drawn to the opportunity to interact with international classmates through classes, and, as someone involved in overseas sales at the time, I saw it as a chance to expand my networking opportunities.

Working on assignments with my classmates allowed me to broaden my understanding of various countries and fostered a shared goal of contributing to national development with empathy.

Looking back, I remember gathering on weekends to deeply ponder over assignments with classmates. I also recall being treated to my first horse meat at the home of a Mongolian classmate after an internship, and the warm welcome from Cambodian classmates during a visit to Phnom Penh in 2023.

All these memories are precious to me, and now, my fellow alumni feel like my family. Knowing that I have friends I can meet in any country is reassuring, and I dare to proudly assert that ISUS' development contributes to global progress.

MIPD 6 Field Trip to Saemangeum Development Office

“Zooming Through Next-Gen Innovation with MIPD6”

On March 22, MIPD 6 students embarked on an epic field trip to Saemangeum Development and Investment Agency, uncovering Korea's coolest waterfront project. Saemangeum isn't just any development—it's a green energy powerhouse with high-tech farming and a knack for tourism and ecology. Plus, it's an international economic zone in the making!

The best part? The agency's office was like stepping into a virtual race track! Imagine Virtual Reality adventures with a dash of urban planning. Students left buzzing with futuristic ideas for sustainable cities. Saemangeum: where innovation meets excitement!



The long-awaited Cherry Blossom season has begun

“Petal in Their Hair, Joy in Their Hearts, and a Telltale Sign of Sleep Deprivation”

Amidst their busy schedules and academic demands, ISUS students took a well-deserved break to immerse themselves in Seoul's enchanting cherry blossom season—a highly anticipated highlight of the year!

From Jamsil Seokchon Lake to vibrant Yeouido and picturesque Han River cycling routes, students reveled in nature's pink spectacle, refusing to miss this annual extravaganza. Amidst shared laughter and camaraderie, friendships blossomed, mirroring the beauty of the cherry blossoms around them and demonstrating ISUS students' adeptness at balancing work and leisure with flair.

With petals adorning their hair, joy in their hearts, and, inevitably, the telltale signs of sleep deprivation on their faces, ISUS students made the most of cherry blossom bliss in the heart of Seoul!



MUD 7 Monitoring Program: Visit to KOICA Office

Thanks to KOICA's sponsorship, students participated in the transformative KOICA Monitoring Program. It was more than a monitoring visit; it included a deep dive into Dojang, the Korean Traditional Stamp.

This program enriches the MUD 7 class at ISUS, enhancing the monitoring curriculum and providing valuable insights and

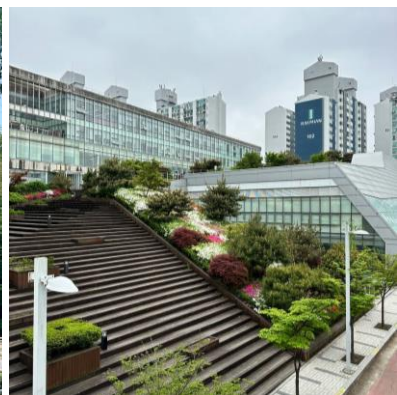
hands-on experience in urban development. Through workshops, site visits, and mentorship, KOICA's support enables students to understand sustainable urban practices and innovative solutions. During the visit, students learned about the history and artistry behind Dojang and had the chance to create their designs. We thank KOICA for their ongoing support and commitment to shaping the next generation of urban innovators!



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