

ICSB Introduces Gross Domestic Humanity at South Korea's National Assembly

Built on the ICSB HCE Index, Gross Domestic Humanity links entrepreneurship and human flourishing, with Korea as a case study.

SEOUL, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA, October 16, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [International Council for Small Business \(ICSB\)](#) introduced Gross Domestic Humanity (GDH), a new measure of national progress, at South Korea's National Assembly on October 15, 2026, during an international policy forum co-hosted by National Assembly Member Baek Sun-hee, ICSB, and Policy Space for Inclusion and Innovation.



Professor Ki-Chan Kim, Chair of ICSB, presents the GDH Korea Country Report 2026 to the Hon. Baek Sun-hee, Member of the National Assembly, in Seoul on October 15, 2026.

GDH was developed by Dr. Ayman ElTarabishy, President and CEO of ICSB and Teaching Professor of Management at the George Washington University School of Business, together with Professor Ki-Chan Kim, Chair of ICSB and a South Korean scholar of human-centered entrepreneurship.

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The measure builds on the [2026 ICSB Human-Centered Entrepreneurship Index](#), developed by Dr. ElTarabishy, which examines entrepreneurial activity and human flourishing across 43 economies.

The Index identifies a notable finding: South Korea ranks second in entrepreneurial activity and first in risk-taking, but 26th in human flourishing. The difference between its entrepreneurship and flourishing rankings is the largest among the economies studied.

GDH provides a complementary perspective to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), examining how

entrepreneurial activity and economic progress relate to people's well-being.

"GDP asks how much a country makes. GDH asks how much a country helps its people flourish," said Dr. ElTarabishy.

Professor Ki-Chan Kim presents Korea's national policy report

Professor Kim presented findings from the GDH Korea Country Report 2026, including a national policy report titled "From More Jobs to Jobs Where People Flourish: Beyond GDP to GDH."

The report examines how Korea can build on its entrepreneurial achievements to create opportunities for people, particularly younger generations, to develop their potential through meaningful employment, education, and participation in economic life.

"If GDP measures a country's economic production and growth, GDH adds the lens of human flourishing to economic growth," said Professor Kim. "Entrepreneurship is the means; human flourishing is the purpose."

Kim emphasized the importance of viewing people not simply as economic resources but as individuals whose capabilities can grow through meaningful work, trust, and opportunity.

Dr. ElTarabishy and Professor Kim have collaborated for more than a decade on human-centered entrepreneurship, combining international academic research with practical questions about economic development and human well-being.

National Assembly connects research with policy discussions

The forum was co-hosted by the Hon. Baek Sun-hee, Member of South Korea's National Assembly, bringing the GDH framework into a national policy discussion.

In remarks published in the proceedings, Representative Baek said the purpose of economic growth is to help more people realize their potential, and placed young people at the center of



From left: Professor Ki-Chan Kim, Chair of ICSB; the Hon. Baek Sun-hee, Member of the National Assembly; Ambassador Martín García Moritán, ICSB Fellow; and Dr. Ayman ElTarabishy, President and CEO of ICSB, at the National Assembly in Seoul on October 15, 2026.

that question.

She outlined plans to establish a National Assembly members' research group focused on young people's employment, housing, and the social safety net. The proposed group would bring young people and experts together to examine these issues and provide research that could inform future policy and legislative discussions.

Park Neung-hoo, head of Policy Space for Inclusion and Innovation, noted Korea's success in achieving both industrialization and democratization in a short period, while pointing to the difficulties young people face in finding good jobs and affordable housing.

The forum also introduced a proposed New Deal for Korea, organized around three themes: Hope, Harmony, and Human Flourishing. The proposal is presented as a direction for future research and policy discussion.

A new research direction across generations

Ambassador Martín García Moritán, an ICSB Fellow, former Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, and a key contributor to the establishment of UN MSMEs Day, put forward an initiative on Senior and Intergenerational Human-Centered Entrepreneurship as part of the broader GDH agenda.

The initiative received broad support among forum participants, opening a new international research discussion on how entrepreneurship can connect generations and contribute to human flourishing throughout life.

The proposed research direction explores how younger and older generations can learn from one another and work together through entrepreneurship.

Connecting research and policy

The presentation in Seoul is part of ICSB's broader international effort to strengthen connections between academic research and policymaking.

ICSB advances research that helps policymakers make informed decisions. Through internationally comparable evidence and academic collaboration, the organization seeks to bridge entrepreneurship research with public policy while leaving policy decisions to the appropriate institutions.

GDH builds on survey data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor and the Gallup World Poll. It combines entrepreneurial activity and human flourishing using a geometric mean, a method also used by the United Nations Development Programme in its Human Development Index. Under this approach, strong performance in one dimension cannot fully offset weaker

performance in the other.

The findings are comparisons among 43 economies and do not establish causation. They provide a research foundation for further investigation and discussion.

ICSB plans to publish the Index annually and use GDH to inform international research and policy discussions on entrepreneurship, economic development, employment, education, and human well-being.

About the Human-Centered Entrepreneurship Index

ELTarabishy, A. (2026). The Human-Centered Entrepreneurship Index (HCE Index): Measuring human flourishing and entrepreneurial dynamism. [Journal of the International Council for Small Business](#).

Research publication: <https://doi.org/10.1080/26437015.2026.2683549>

Full Index results: <https://icsb.org/hce-index/>

About ICSB

The International Council for Small Business (ICSB) is a global nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., that advances entrepreneurship and small business development through research, education, policy, and international collaboration. ICSB co-founded United Nations Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day, established by the UN General Assembly in 2017.

Website: <https://icsb.org/>

Ayman ELTarabishy

International Council for Small Business

+1 202-629-7192

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