



**PECC 2021 Internship Program
Internship Report
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The PECC summer internship is my first exposure into the arena of policy development on the multilateral level. With an intention to learn more about the works of PECC in the APEC region, I gladly took up the offer to participate in the summer internship program 2021.

The virtual internship focused primarily on attending the APEC 2021 webinar hosted by New Zealand where policy makers gather and provide updates. The biggest takeaway for me is to understand how policy consensus is reached, which is a process that includes extensive application of legal concepts. As part of civil society, our everyday lives are in many ways benefited from multilateral agreements which we are hardly aware of. For example, government programs for university students and young entrepreneurs, or even VISA-free arrangements could possibly stem from multilateral programs initiated by organizations like the APEC. This is how the experience appeared particularly interesting to me as I was able to witness how cross-jurisdictional corporations are started in the first place.

The internship experience was also inspirational as it demonstrated how law reconciles with public policy in many aspects. Lawyers play a key facilitating role in the process of policy formulations. For example, the drafting of multilateral agreements, whether binding or non-binding, to be endorsed by members' economies. Additionally, the experience allows me to better understand the law itself as well. For example, there were webinars that provided the most updated legal development across jurisdictions. One session that particularly drew my attention was about how certain countries have introduced or refined the nation's data privacy act, which is directly relevant to my own career development in law and fills the gap that is missing from my academic studies.

Research activities

Apart from attending the APEC 2021 webinar, there are other research tasks given by the PECC Secretariats. The best part of the experience is that we got exposure into different industries. For example, household electricity consumption across APEC and trade distortion measures used by economies in recent years. There were occasions where air traffic data and oil price also came into play.

Research tasks provided an opportunity for me to understand the skills required by policy researchers and the works they are exposed to in their career. For example, the skills to collect, process and interpret data and the ability to translate insights in ways convincing to policy

makers and the civil society. It has also enriched my understanding on the position of APEC's economies on international affairs. For example, the APEC economies in fact made the most progress in facilitating cross-border trade of services in comparison to counterparts such as the EU, expanding my horizon to think from a global and wider perspective. Combining the experiences attending the APEC 2021 seminars, I became able to see future opportunities for my own career, which is helpful for career planning.

Professional development

As mentioned, the realm of policy and laws are inseparable. The simplest example is the drafting of cross-border trade agreements which require the skills and expertise of lawyers who need to understand the underlying policy objectives, especially on an international level where conflicts of laws often arise. Therefore, the experience has enriched my understanding about the role of lawyer played in the area of public or private international law.

Another key professional development is to develop the knowledge about economic structure across the APEC region. Before pursuing the JD program, I obtained an undergraduate degree in business management. In the APEC 2021 webinar, a commonly occurred topic was on how to resolve the challenges faced by SMEs. Whilst multinational conglomerates are generally well-known, the SMEs instead contributed to the majority of market players within an economy. Whilst institutional factors are well-resolved (such as having policy tools and sophisticated trade agreements), challenges usually arise in the implementation phase as SMEs generally lack sufficient capacity to understand compliance requirements. At this juncture, I would like to highlight two inspirations I developed. First, how the role of multidisciplinary research and cooperation facilitate cross-border cooperation, which requires a vision from a broader perspective. Second, how policy makers could maximize their value added based on the works done by lawyers. It has therefore inspired me on how to combine the knowledge I developed from academic studies; on how to position myself, as a youth from Hong Kong, in the future so that I could make the best use of experience and skills acquired in this internship.

It was unfortunate that the internship could only be carried out virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the experience to enjoy Singapore would have become a major highlight if travelling was available, it was still memorable as the HKCEPC and members from the PECC attempted their best to accommodate and involve us in different aspects of their works. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude towards both organizations and my home

institution, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in making the virtual internship happen despite being in trying moments in the century. Nonetheless, the journey does not stop only because the internship has come to an end. I remain open to expand my future career in Singapore and to explore Singapore personally after the pandemic is over.

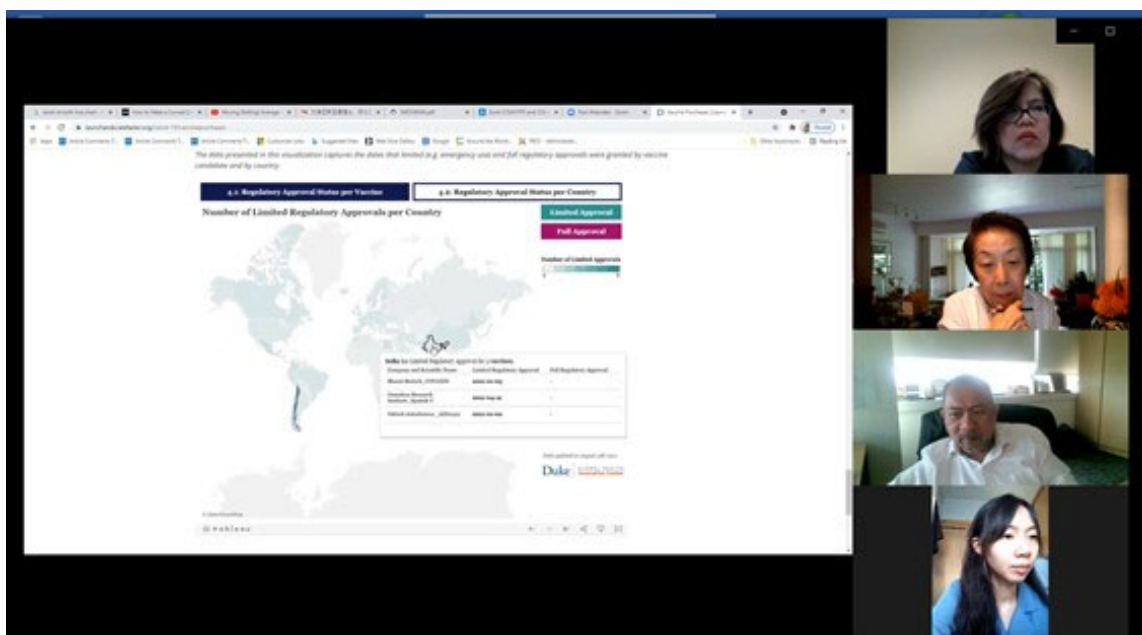
Certainly, the takeaway from the experience goes beyond the individual level. As a PECC member economy, Hong Kong's well-established reputation and economic structure still allow us to enjoy positive and optimistic prosperity as the world economy starts to rejuvenate. Therefore, I would encourage all future students to participate in the PECC internships, not only as a means to expand their horizons but also to develop a vision to critically evaluate current issues from a transnational and holistic perspective. From there, we are able to bring back valuable input to create impact to our home economy.

**HKCPEC's participation at
PECC Virtual Internship Programme 2021
Photos provided by Melissa Tong and Truston Yu**

(1)Melissa and Truston are having a virtual meeting with PECC colleagues
*(from left to right on top row: Ms Betty Ip, Ms Zakiah Kassim and Secretary-
General Mr Eduardo Pedrosa) -*



(2)Melissa is attending a webinar discussion on vaccines development -



(3) Melissa and Truston are having a work meeting with PECC colleagues -

