

Call for Papers

"Democratic Resilience and Social Movements in South Korea: Challenges and Future Prospects"

9th Annual Conference of the Social Science Korean Studies Network in Europe (SoKEN)

Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Turku, Finland

9 (Thu) –10 (Fri) April 2026



The Centre for East Asian Studies (CEAS) at the University of Turku is pleased to announce that it will host the 9th Annual Conference of the European Network for Social Sciences in Korean Studies (SoKEN) on 9–10 April 2026. This year's event will also mark the 20th anniversary of the foundation of CEAS. To commemorate this special occasion, we are honored to welcome Professor Kang Won-taek from Seoul National University, one of South Korea's most prominent political scientists, as the keynote speaker. The conference is organized as part of the Korean Studies Seed Project, "Advancing Korean Studies in Finland: Building Foundations and Expanding Horizons," funded by the Korean Studies Promotion Service (KSPS). The project aims to strengthen and expand the presence of Korean Studies in Finland through research collaboration and scholarly exchange.

Conference Theme

"Democratic Resilience and Social Movements in South Korea: Challenges and Future Prospects"

The current global socio-political landscape is marked by the growing influence of extreme right-wing movements that challenge democratic norms and values. Even nations long regarded as models of advanced democracy have not been immune to this reactionary wave. Against this backdrop, South Korea offers a compelling case of civic engagement and democratic resilience. The active responses of Korean citizens in times of political crisis demonstrate how democratic principles can be revitalized and defended when under threat, providing valuable lessons of global significance.

By situating South Korea's experience within a broader comparative framework, this conference seeks to stimulate new perspectives on how democracy can be strengthened and sustained in the face of internal and external challenges. The theme highlights Korea's pivotal role as a democracy navigating both domestic pressures and global transformations.

Call for Papers

South Korea stands as one of Asia's most dynamic democracies, facing complex domestic and international challenges. This conference seeks to explore how democratic resilience is expressed through civil society, activism, and social movements. By focusing on these dimensions, the conference aims to foster a deeper understanding of Korea's evolving political, social, and cultural landscape.

Scope and Topics

We welcome paper proposals from the social sciences broadly defined—including sociology, political science, anthropology, economics, communication, and related disciplines. While the main theme focuses on democracy and social movements in South Korea, the topics are open, and submissions addressing any aspect of contemporary Korean society are encouraged.

Eligibility

The conference warmly welcomes submissions from young scholars and PhD students, as well as established academics. The conference does not provide visa support. Participants are responsible for arranging their own travel documents.

Funding Support

Participants whose papers are accepted will be offered up to two nights of accommodation in Turku. In addition, modest travel funding may be available, depending on budget availability.

Submission Guidelines

1. Important Deadlines
 - a. Abstract submission: 9 Feb 2026, 17:00 (Helsinki time)
 - b. Notification of acceptance: Early March 2026
 - c. Full paper submission: 15 March 2026
2. Requirements
 - a. Abstract length: 250-300 words
 - b. Short bio: Up to 100 words
 - c. Full paper length: Max. 8,000 words
3. Submission Email
 - a. il.g.lee@utu.fi

Contact

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