

2012 Shenzhen Soft Science Development Foundation•

China Think Tank Forum & CDI's Annual Meeting in

Beijing

Farmers' Migration to Cities & China's Industrial Upgrading

1. Background

2012 Shenzhen Soft Science Development Foundation• China Think Tank Forum & CDI's Annual Meeting was held in Beijing on Oct. 25. This forum was jointly launched by Shenzhen Soft Science Development Foundation and CDI. This forum, under the theme of “Farmers’ Migration to Cities and China's Industrial Upgrading”, focused on how to reform the system favorable to rural farmers’ migration to cities and how to accelerate China’s industrial upgrading, etc.

China’s urbanization rate hit 51.27% in 2011. As a big agricultural nation with thousands of years of farming tradition, China is at a historical turning point — the population in urban areas exceeded that in rural areas for the first time. This change means more than changes in the percentage of urban population. It also represents dramatic shifts in people’s life style, production mode, job structure, consumer behavior and values.

China's GDP grew by 7.4% year on year in Q3 this year, which hit the bottom in recent years. The composite average of China's macroeconomic growth has already taken on an obvious downward trend. Additionally, increases in the cost of land, resources, environment and labor, and backwards technological innovation have weakened the competitive edge of the Chinese manufacturing sector. This problem has been compounded by the backflow of the manufacturing sector and reindustrialization in developed countries as well as pressure from low costs in some emerging economies. So, the economic growth mode relying on traditional industrialization is not applicable any longer. The future economic growth will be driven by deepening urbanization and industrial modernization.

Under the theme of “Farmers’ Migration to Cities and China's Industrial Upgrading”, this forum will center on, facing internal and external uncertainties and increasing risks, how to design an appropriate system concerning farmers’ migration to cities and how to bring into full play China’s competitive labor costs to occupy high-end links in global industrial division so as to draw widespread attention from decision-makers, research institutes, and all walks of life to urbanization of migrant workers and China’s industrial upgrading.

Speeches on the design of the farmers’ urbanization system, improvement of urban public services, and Chinese manufacturing upgrading were made by Fan Gang (president of CDI), Ma Weihua (president of Shenzhen Soft Science Development Foundation and president of CMB), Ma Xiaohe (vice president of Macroeconomic Institute of NDRC), Professor Lin Ling (academic adviser with Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences and famous economist), Huang Yiping (professor of National School of Development, Beijing University), Professor Dong Keyong (dean of School of Public Administration and Policy, Renmin University of China), Professor Ji Shao (director of Labor Economics Research Center, Capital University of Economics and

Business), researcher Guo Wanda (vice president of CDI), Wei Houkai (professor of Institute for Urban and Environmental Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), Lan Haitao (professor of director of the rural economics office of Industrial and Technical Economic Institute of NRDC). Over 100 participants from research institutes, colleges and universities, NGOs, and media attended this forum.

2. Agenda

Oct. 25, 2012	
14:30-14:45	Remarks and speeches: Ma Weihua, president, Shenzhen Soft Science Development Foundation Fan Gang, president, CDI
14:45-16:00	Part 1 How to Improve the System Concerning Farmers' Migration to Cities?
Focus	What affects farmers' migration to cities? How the urbanization, industrialization, agricultural modernization processes affect farmers' migration to cities? Is the urbanization of migrant workers an unattainable goal? What responsibilities should the central and local governments take in the reform of the benefit system for migrant workers?
Host: Huang Yiping, professor, China Center for Economic Research (CCER), Peking University	Speakers: 1. Guo Wanda, executive vice president, CDI 2. Ma Xiaohu, vice president, Macroeconomic Institute of NDRC 3. Pei Changhong, director, Economic Research Institute of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
16:15-17:30	Part 2 How to Drive China's Industrial Upgrading?
Focus	Does the Chinese manufacturing sector enjoy its competitive edge? How do farmers' migration to cities and China's industrial upgrading influence each other? How to maintain China's competitive edge in terms of labor costs and the sustainable development of traditional competitive industries? How to move to the high-end manufacturing sector and occupy the high-end links in global industrial division?

<p>Host: Dong Keyong, dean, School of Public Administration and Policy, Renmin University of China</p>	<p>Speakers: 1. Lin Ling, academic adviser, Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences 2. Wei Houkai, deputy director, Institute for Urban and Environmental Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 3. Lan Haitao, director, rural economics office of Industrial and Technical Economic Institute of NRDC</p>
<p>17:30-17:40</p>	<p>Summary: Li Luoli, vice chairman, CDI</p>