



ICES
International Conference
of Economics Students

PROSPECTUS OF ICES2013
The 5th International Conference of Economics Students

thePURSUITof LABOR WELL-BEING





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The global economy faces serious inequalities in the labor market. As economies grow, the gap between the poor and rich people widens. Many labors are typically exploited and underpaid, especially in developing countries. Although many foreign firms invest heavily in developing countries, many people in developing country still live below poverty line. In Thailand, unemployment rate is extremely low, but many Thai people work hard with low productivity. As a result, their wages are extremely low which affect their living standard. Thus, increasing productivity becomes critical. Government has to step in to invest in research and development to increase the labor productivity.

Due to this issue, Thammasat University, in collaboration with various respected colleges, launched ICES (International Conference of Economics Students) to address the current problems of labor and increase popular awareness of the problem. Please join us to discuss these issues and help to reduce inequalities in society.

OBJECTIVES OF ICES

- To create an opportunity for economic students to learn and gain knowledge from renowned guest speakers and share their knowledge about labor economic with fellow participants from many countries.
- To raise awareness of current labor issues and provides opportunities for the younger generation to realize its role in local and international development.
- To promote and encourage the exchange of perspectives to learn from each country's diversification and strengthen understanding and friendship among university students.
- To enable students to critically analyze and apply knowledge from the conference in real life situations as future laborers or entrepreneurs, especially after ASEAN integration.
- Provide an international experience for participants and enhance skills required for success in the international realm.

PAST CONFERENCES



2007

ASEAN-CHINA REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF THE DIVERSITY

The first ICES addressed China's rise to power and relationships with its ASEAN neighbors. Honorable and well-known policy makers, scholars and entrepreneurs are joined by more than sixty delegates representing their nations in two panel discussions. The delegates would have opportunities to present their opinions, synthesize, and discuss with the panels as well as with students. Discussed topics include economic development, trade and negotiation, and education and culture.

2008



ASEAN DEVELOPMENT AT A CROSSROADS?

The second ICES highlighted Asian countries' survival, through the sustainable development, in the world of globalization. It stressed the potential hindrance to the development as well as worthy suggestions to achieve successful cooperation among Asian countries. More than a hundred delegates and experts discussed the current state of development from different perspectives, ideated possible future paths, and formulated potential solutions to problems encountered.



2011

CHALLENGES IN NEW ERA OF ASIAN ECONOMY

The third ICES focused on the challenges that Asian countries must overcome and the new responsibilities that would follow as they are about to take on a prominent role in the global economy. The conference started on the interaction between the dominant power in the West and the rising Asia and the economic integration within and between the two. The discussion then focused on Asia and its new challenges and responsibilities. Topics examined included poverty and inequality reduction, environmental responsibility, aging economy and sustainable growth.



2012

THE RISING ASIA: ITS QUEST TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Fourth ICES focused on the sustainable development for Asian economy as global economic cycle is shorter and economic crises appear more frequently. It emphasized the steps to improve each country's structures in order to achieve long term sustainable economic growth. Topics included sociopolitical, economic, and environmental factors. The conference opened with an examination of how politic structures, as well as social and cultural values affect economic development. Economic systems for efficient allocation of resources were also discussed, as well as environmental management issue of how to sustain natural resources while fueling the growing industrial world.





Background

One main goal of economics is to raise peoples' quality of life. Economics teaches us to allocate resources in the most efficient way to maximize total output. The more output is produced, the greater individuals can consume and raise their standard of living. In reality, there is no fair distribution. Labors are an indispensable source of power to drive the

economy forward. Nevertheless, their living standards and the quality of lives have been neglected. The problem of labor exploitation is prevalent, especially in developing countries where governments focus mainly on how to achieve growth target and overlook tradeoff drawbacks which may result in low pay and the suppression of labors' right. Many workers are underpaid and work in terrible and unsafe working environment.

On this ground, there are several questions worth discussing: what are the main causes of the exploitation of labors? How can public sector help alleviate the problem? Are there better ways to achieve economic growth and also improve the standard of living for labors? We need your helps. Please join us create a better solutions to help our friends to live in the better world.



Motivation

Since the beginning of human progress, labor is the key productive force. However, the living conditions of the laborers in many countries have been in poor standards. This is especially true for the developing countries where the labor protection institutions are inadequate or not fully enforced. If one aspect of economics is to study the way to enrich the quality of lives of the people, the living standards of workers must not be abandoned, since, in every society, labors share largest portion in total population and contribute to the prosperity of nations.

Moreover, since countries are becoming more globalized, there are new challenges waiting for countries and laborers. The impacts on the countries in terms of countries' development potency and the effect on the domestic workers, when the free movement of labors is implemented, are still in the discussion. The coming economic regionalization under AEC further intensifies the debate.

Thus, the importance of the topics relating labors are the study of how labor market functions, what are the loopholes of the market which allows the exploitation of labors and how the man-made institutions can mitigate the problems or even enrich the lives of the labors. The increasing important function of human capital, its capabilities to enhance economic growth, countries' competitiveness, and standard of living will be discussed throughout the conference along with the topics mentioned above.



SESSIONS

Session 1:

The Labor Movement's Prospects under the AEC

"...I'd highly recommend it to students who are looking for a unique experience this summer!..."

KOH Peng Yam
Singapore, ICES2008



After 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community or AEC's impact will include liberalization of the market for goods, as well as free movement of production factors, including labor. The member countries skilled labor will move freely across countries which can create job opportunities and enhance market competitiveness. In practice, country's specific regulations still prevent completely free labor mobility. However, AEC will create diverse impacts on member countries including their laborers. This session aims to understand how AEC implementation will affect labor movement, especially within ASEAN countries. Potential discussion topics include:

- The effects of the blueprint on the labor market within the region.
- Factors determining inflow and outflow labor movement among countries.
- Categories of jobs with possible future movement.
- Possible impact on member countries, such as brain drain.
- Labor adjustment to overcome future challenges.

Session 2:

Child Labor and Country Development Perspectives

Child labor is seen as one of the main problems which significantly affect a country's development. However, the problem remains to be solved. Child labor is closely related to poverty, human capital, and national income. Poverty, child labor, and human capital formation are reciprocally reinforcing, because children must work instead of studying. This in turns obstructs the improvement of human capital. Children with low productivity will earn lower incomes and are trapped in the vicious cycle of poverty. This session aims to understand the relationship of child labor, poverty, country development and related challenges of the problem. Potential discussion topics include:

- Child labor attribution to household, national income, and country development.
- The trade-off between child labor and human capital formation.
- Child labor abuse and the vicious cycle of poverty.
- The future perspective of child labor and challenges;
the persistence of child labor in spite of regulations in the midst of globalization.

"...I am sure ICES is a place you can recharge your batteries, generate your ideas and you can make the different for ASEAN-China region when you leave ICES"

Nguyen Pham Mai Vy
Vietnam, ICES2007

Session 3:

Public Sector's Role in Enriching Human Capital and its Contribution to Growth, Development and Standard of Living

Laborers have always been the main source of power driving an economy forward, since the dawn of capitalism. However, laborers' standard of living has been neglected, especially in developing countries where governments put more focus on foreign investment and GDP growth. To do so, government may keep wage low and suppress labor rights. Such policies can attract more investment, but also create the distress and misery which can result in social unrest in the long run. The public sector can both attract investment and improve laborers' standard of living by spending on the human capital development, with education, health care, and retraining program. The main aim of this session is to discuss the potential human capital development programs which can enhance productivity and help laborers support economic growth transformation. Potential topics for discussion are as following:

- Education and productivity development.
- Retraining programs: opportunities during crisis.
- Public health care and nutrition: increasing the return from education and its direct contribution to productivity.
- The importance of equal access to building capability for all.



Session 4:

The Importance of Labor Protection Institution in Preventing Labor Exploitation

In a perfectly competitive market, laborers would be paid according to their value of marginal products and efficiency. However, this is not practical in the real world, market failures occur and some lead to exploitation of laborers whose wages are less than the value they actually produce. Monopsony creates inefficient market in that the level of employment and wages will be higher than in the perfectly competitive market. Exploitation of laborers creates the need for labor protection institutions which can enhance efficiency and fairness. Potential topics of discussion include:

- What should be considered as fair wages
- Types of market failure which lead to unfair and inefficient employment conditions.
- Empirical evidences of the unfair labor practices.
- The role of labor protection institutions in enhancing efficiency and fairness.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DAY1 : SATURDAY 20 JULY 2013

- 08.00 - 09.00 Registration
- 09.00 - 09.30 Welcome Speech and Opening Remarks
- 09.30 - 10.00 **Keynote Speech**
- 10.00 - 10.30 Coffee Break
- 10.30 - 12.30 ***Session 1:**
The Labor Movement's Prospects under the AEC
- 12.30 - 13.30 LUNCH
- 13.30 - 15.30 ***Session 2: Child Labor and**
Country Development Perspectives
- 15.30 - 16.00 Coffee Break
- 16.00 - 17.00 Activities and Economics Workshop

"...If you love economics and want to experience the feeling like I did, you should apply for ICES 2011 and I believe it will be your unforgettable memory..."

Jenny
Vietnam, ICES2008

DAY2 : SUNDAY 21 JULY 2013

- 09.00 - 11.00 ***Session 3: Public Sector's Role in Enriching Human Capital**
and its Contribution to Growth, Development and Standard of Living
- 11.00 - 12.00 LUNCH
- 12.00 - 14.00 ***Session 4: The Importance of Labor Protection Institution**
in Preventing Labor Exploitation
- 14.00 - 14.30 Coffee Break
- 14.30 - 17.30 Activities and Economics Workshop
- 17.30 - 18.00 Closing Ceremony

DAY3 : MONDAY 22 JULY 2013

- 8.00-17.00 Field Trip
- 17.00 - 18.30 Free time
- 18.30 - 22.00 Gala Dinner (International Night)

*each session includes seminar, paper presentation and Q&A

CONTACT INFORMATION



ICES
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of Economics Students

Student Council of Bachelor of Economics (SCOBE)

B.E. International Program
Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University
2 Prachan Rd., Bangkok 10200 Thailand

Website : www.icesforum.org

E-mail : info@icesforum.org

Phone : (+66) 80 057 1354

Fax : (+66) 2 224 0150

I believe in the dignity of labor, whether with head or hand;
that the world owes no man a living but that it owes every man
an opportunity to make a living.

- John D. Rockefeller, Jr. -

