



**PECC Internship Program 2024  
Internship Report**

**Period of internship:  
24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2024**

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## **1. Introduction**

During my two-month internship at the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, I worked at the International Secretariat in Singapore, focusing on international economics within the Asia-Pacific region. My responsibilities mainly included regular data work and conducting in-depth analysis on trade balances and labour force statistics. The internship provided me with a hands-on opportunity to utilise my theoretical knowledge, enhancing my understanding of economic dynamics and regional trade.

## **2. Learning Objectives and Expectations**

My primary goal of the internship was to develop strong economic analytical skills. I was eager to understand how the economic concepts from my studies could be applied to real-world changing scenarios and gain insights into the geoeconomics judgments and strategies within an international research environment. The internship not only met these expectations but also offered additional advantages that broadened my skill set.

## **3. Key Experiences and Tasks**

One of the most significant projects I undertook was an analysis of labour force statistics, focusing on employment trends, workforce participation, and unemployment rates across different demographics and economies. This project required meticulous data handling, from cleaning and organising large datasets to performing detailed statistical analysis. Interpreting labour market fluctuations, especially in the context of external economic factors, was a valuable learning experience for me.

To be detailed, I analysed labour force participation rates across economies, with a focus on differences by gender and age groups. The analysis revealed diverse labour force participation trends, with some economies showing relatively low female participation whilst others maintaining high rates despite an overall decline in recent years. Additionally, many economies had an increase in labour force participation among older adults during the pandemic, driven by factors such as economic necessity, health concerns, postponed retirement plans, and the availability of flexible work options. Overall, my findings underscored the diverse labour market dynamics across different demographics and regions, influenced by both local conditions and global events.

In addition to labour force analysis, I worked on a comprehensive trade analysis project. This involved evaluating trade balances over a twenty-year period, identifying trends, and analysing the impact of trade policies and global economic conditions on these balances.

My analysis explored global trade patterns over the past twenty years, revealing significant trends influenced by geoeconomic strategies. I figured out that some economies had experienced strong export growth and positive trade balances, partly due to strategic shifts such as relocating manufacturing bases to maintain their competitive edge. Conversely, other economies often faced challenges, like increasing trade deficits and declining net exports, as a result of global economic shifts and changing trade policies. My report underscored the complex interplay between economic powers, policy decisions, and the global redistribution of manufacturing and trade networks. The complexity of the trade data, combined with the need to present findings in a clear and concise manner, honed my ability to synthesise large amounts of information and express it effectively.

Throughout my internship, I also attended numerous speeches, and the most impactful one was delivered by Professor Tan Kong Yam on the implications of sustained US-China rivalry for

ASEAN and its geoeconomic strategies. The lecture provided critical insights into the shifting dynamics of global trade and the strategic relocation of manufacturing bases to ASEAN economies in response to China's growing role in trade and investment. This experience deepened my understanding of the complex interplay between global powers and their influence on regional economies, and informed me of the importance of considering geopolitical factors in economic analysis and decision-making processes.

#### **4. Skills and Knowledge Gained**

Throughout the internship, I developed several key skills, particularly in data visualisation and analytics using Excel and other statistical tools. This significantly enhanced my ability to interpret complex and real-world economic data. Besides, I gained a deeper understanding of labour market dynamics and global trade patterns, especially how geopolitical tensions influence trade flows, investment patterns, and economic policies, which will be invaluable in my future career. Additionally, my thinking and problem-solving skills improved as I navigated challenges such as data inconsistencies, interpretation of important economic indicators, and analysing global events.

#### **5. Impact on Career Goals**

This internship had a profound impact on my career aspiration. Working on detailed economic and trade analysis had solidified my interest in pursuing a career in data analytics and economic research. The experience had given me the confidence to tackle complex datasets related to economic issues and the desire to further understand Asia-Pacific economic situations. Now I have a clearer vision on the type of work I would like to engage in and the path I need to follow to achieve my career goals.

#### **6. Collaborative Work Environment**

The collaborative working environment at the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council was incredibly supportive and conducive to learning. My colleagues were always willing to share their knowledge and expertise, which greatly enriched my internship experience. Mr Eduardo Pedrosa took his time to introduce me to economic indicators that I had not encountered before and guided me through emerging topics like connectivity. Ms Betty Ip provided me with opportunities to attend a wide range of lectures on diverse themes which broadened my knowledge. Ms Nor Irdawaty was instrumental in offering me guidance on finding the right direction for my research. Ms Zakiah Kassim often helped me with visa-related issues, ensuring that my time during the internship was smooth and hassle-free. This supportive atmosphere not only made my internship more enjoyable but also significantly contributed to my professional growth.

#### **7. Conclusion**

Overall, my internship at the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council was an enriching experience that broadened my horizons and formed my characteristic economic sense. It provided me with practical analytical skills, deepened my understanding of economic concepts, and enlightened my career direction. The opportunity to work on meaningful projects such as labour force and trade analysis, had equipped me with the tools and knowledge I need to succeed in the field of economics. I was grateful for the experience and confident that it had prepared me well for my future endeavours.