

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UNDERSTANDING OF ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY BETWEEN
SINGAPOREANS AND THAIS**

Thitiphat Podok, Assumption University, Thailand
Amonrat Thoumrungroje, Assumption University, Thailand

[dx.doi.org/10.18374/JIBE-13-2.6](https://doi.org/10.18374/JIBE-13-2.6)

ABSTRACT

This study explores and compares the understanding of economic community between citizens of Thailand and Singapore with a specific focus on the upcoming ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). A new scale comprising of the elements that constitute AEC was developed. Survey data were collected by means of self-administered questionnaires, which yielded the final usable samples of 2,275 Thais and 857 Singaporeans. Using exploratory factor analysis via orthogonal rotation, we found two common underlying factors—each of which consists of five items that possess ‘same form equivalence’, ‘factorial similarities’ or ‘configural invariance’ across two national samples. We later labeled the two emerging factors as 1) Regional Competitive Integration (‘RCI’), and 2) Regional Economic Cooperation (‘REC’). Future research can further validate these new scales across different cultural settings and adopt these new constructs for their studies.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Study, Understanding of Economic Community, ASEAN, Regional Competitive Integration, Regional Economic Cooperation