

Latest Books by IPS Researchers

INTRACO: Blazing a Trail Overseas for Singapore?

Through the lens of the now-defunct Singapore government-linked company (GLC), *INTRACO: Blazing a Trail Overseas for Singapore?* offers a historical analysis of the country's economic development strategy. Written by Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Research Fellow Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, the book follows the development of the former GLC, International Trading Company (INTRACO), and analyses its instrumental role in Singapore's broader economic development.

Since Singapore's independence in 1965, GLCs like INTRACO were introduced by the then Deputy Prime Minister, the late Dr Goh Keng Swee, to fulfil strategic economic objectives. Dr Goh himself was a major pioneer architect of Singapore's remarkable transformation, propelling it from a third world to first. As the country's "lifeblood" has been entrepot trade, INTRACO was created to "blaze a trail overseas" and fulfil numerous objectives, one of which was to facilitate a global network of commercial ties during the Cold War period of heightened geopolitical tensions.

The eventual divestment of INTRACO highlights the same way in which the Singaporean state is acutely responsive to changing global economic and geopolitical trends. Still, it is a remarkable former GLC that stood as a byword for adventure and "can-do" spirit of Singapore's bureaucrats-turned-entrepreneurs.

This book is useful to academics, students, and the interested lay readers for its insights into the role of the state in economic development in post-colonial countries. It also offers insight on the functions of GLCs in building Singapore's economy and the tough business decisions that they faced given their unique form as commercial entities with links to the government.

INTRACO: Blazing a Trail Overseas for Singapore? can be purchased on the World Scientific Publishing [website](#).

Inequality in Singapore

Inequality has become a global phenomenon. Rapid technological advancement and the effects of globalisation on the flow of capital and labour are increasingly polarising income distributions across the world, including Singapore. Despite having a top-tier per-capita gross domestic product that exceeds US\$50,000, the average Singaporean seems to have many grievances and anxieties about life in Singapore. With rising costs of living and stagnating wages, especially for Singaporeans at the lower end of the income distribution, the population has become aware of a yawning income inequality gap.

Edited by IPS Research Fellow Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, *Inequality in Singapore* examines various elements driving the inequality gap in Singapore, through robust exchanges that took place in a series of closed-door discussions on inequality organised by IPS in the first half of 2012. In the volume's seven chapters, contributors from academia, the public and the corporate sectors analysed and debated the underlining drivers of inequality and their impact on Singapore society.

The volume provides a range of views on the multi-faceted nature of inequality in Singapore, touching on topics such as inclusive growth, social mobility, retirement funding and the impact of foreign talent amongst other things. The essays discuss candidly the specific challenges Singapore face in the light of inequality, and offer some policy recommendations. *Inequality in Singapore* will appeal to scholars of public policy as well as policymakers and practitioners interested in the issue of inequality in Singapore.

Inequality in Singapore can be purchased on the World Scientific Publishing [website](#).

Immigration in Singapore

The socio-political effects of immigration on Singapore and its population are subjects of intense national debate, as the population becomes increasingly diverse in recent years. A new publication, *Immigration in Singapore* by N. Vasu, Chan Wen Ling and Yeap Su Yin, examines immigration as a complex social issue. IPS Senior Research Fellows Dr Yap Mui Teng, Dr Mathew Mathews and Dr Leong Chan-Hoong each contributed a chapter to the collection, offering their expertise in the analysis of the socio-political landscape of Singapore's journey as a migrant society that led to the current sentiments of its people.

Dr Yap's chapter "Immigration in Singapore: An Overview", gives a comprehensive overview of the role fulfilled by immigration in Singapore from founding until the present; discusses projections of future population trends; and explains why immigration will likely remain an integral part of Singapore's policy for development. Accompanying her discussion are informative population statistics like the make-up of Singapore's population and population growth trends — giving a complete picture of the development of immigration in Singapore and the imperatives undergirding it. The chapter contends that the level of in-migration is neither predetermined nor static, and will depend on adjustments made elsewhere, including changes in important economic, family and other social institutions.

Another important aspect in the discussion of immigration is immigrants' ability and willingness to integrate with the local population. In their chapter, Dr Mathews and Ms Danielle Hong (former IPS Research Assistant) explore the social integration of immigrants into multiracial Singapore. The chapter "Social Integration of Immigrants into Multiracial Singapore" begins by reviewing two broad forms of multiculturalism models — hard and mild — as seen in many countries before considering the context of multiculturalism in Singapore. The chapter also focuses on immigrants' experience living with people of another culture, drawing from the findings of the *IPS Survey on Immigrants* conducted in 2010 that involved 1,000 new immigrants and 1,001 local-born citizens. The findings highlight several implications for Singapore's practice of multiculturalism, one of which is the possible consequence of a sharpening of class divide that follows ethnic lines as a result of immigration trends.

In his chapter, "Whither Integration? Managing the Politics of Identity and Social Inclusion", Dr Leong highlights the lack of a clear working definition of integration for identifying the gaps between native and naturalised Singaporeans. The absence of a clear definition makes articulating the concept of social cohesion difficult, and his survey at IPS on the social markers of integration is a bid to address this void. Two categories of Singaporeans representing local-born and naturalised citizens were asked to select from a checklist of characteristics on what they considered indicators of integration. Their responses helped to identify the critical markers of intercultural adaptation and the areas of significant discordance between the two acculturating groups, which in the process uncovered core aspects of the Singapore identity. This is useful for understanding the social interactions between immigrants and local-born as well as in designing effective immigration policies.

The volume features researchers from various disciplines that include political science, human geography, public policy studies and security studies. As a collection, it provides a multi-faceted study of immigration, and effectively captures the manner in which immigration has impacted various spheres of Singaporean life. The analyses will appeal to scholars of migration, social change and public policy.

Immigration in Singapore can be purchased on the Amsterdam University Press [website](#).

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