

Dak Lak

Provincial performance in implementing Free Trade Agreements

Fair

BAND 4 OF 6

PERFORMANCE TIER

Fair

Band 4 of 6 — 10th of 34 assessed provinces and cities.

OVERALL SCORE

24.57 / 40

The score is 2.91 points above the national average of 21.66.

STRONGEST PILLAR

8th / 34

Support policies — the strongest pillar, 0.96 points above the national average.

FOUR PILLARS AT A GLANCE

A INFORMATION ACCESS

RANK 11 / 34

5.25 / 10

+0.46 vs avg

B LEGAL IMPLEMENTATION

RANK 18 / 34

5.34 / 10

+0.14 vs avg

C SUPPORT POLICIES

RANK 8 / 34

6.78 / 10

+0.96 vs avg

D SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RANK 16 / 34

6.68 / 10

+0.72 vs avg

★ KEY RELATIVE STRENGTHS

- #3 C5 — Barriers to FTA utilisation
- #4 A6 — Sources of information on FTA-related events
- #5 C8 — Need for FTA support programmes and policies
- #7 C7 — Effectiveness of support policies and programmes implemented by local authorities

CRITICAL AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- #31 A8 — Quality of forecasting and market-orientation information from local authorities
- #29 A2 — Authorities providing FTA information
- #29 C1 — FTA utilisation
- #20 A3 — Channels through which enterprises access information on FTAs

SOURCE: FTA INDEX 2025, PREPARED BY FOREIGN TRADE UNIVERSITY FOR THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE; SURVEY OF 4,066 IMPORT-EXPORT ENTERPRISES. COMPONENT SCORES ARE REPORTED ON A 10-POINT SCALE AND THE OVERALL SCORE ON A 40-POINT SCALE. RANKINGS COVER 34 PROVINCES AND CITIES.

01 Overview of results

Dak Lak scored **24.57 out of 40**, ranking **10th of 34**, and was placed in the **Fair** tier. The province sits 2.91 points above the national average of 21.66, indicating a relatively balanced base for FTA implementation. Support policies is the standout pillar, ranking **8th**, reflecting a business support system that is already delivering reasonably positive results. Firms' actual FTA utilisation, however, still falls short of that support base, with the indicator ranking **29th**. As the Central Highlands' agricultural export hub — above all for coffee and pepper — Dak Lak's central task is to convert its support advantages into broader FTA utilisation.

PERFORMANCE ACROSS THE FOUR PILLARS

Dak Lak National average

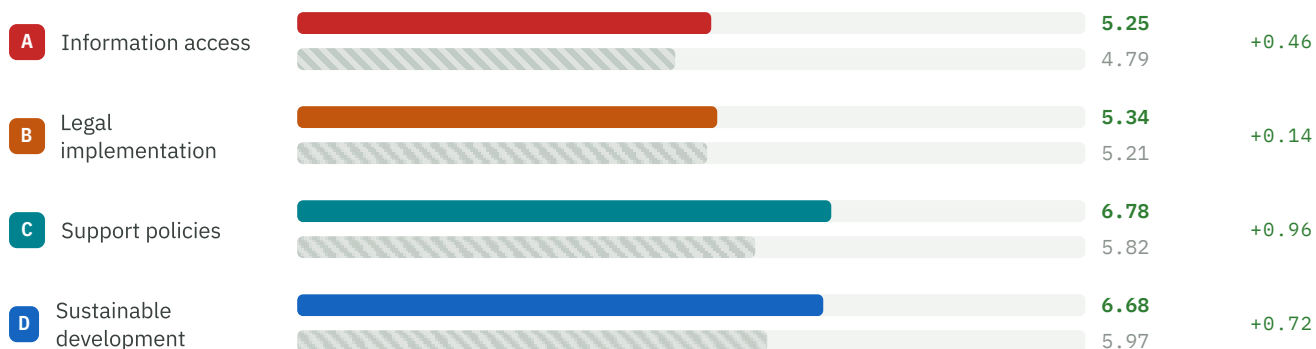


TABLE 1 · COMPONENT SCORES ON A 10-POINT SCALE · DAK LAK VS. NATIONAL AVERAGE ACROSS 34 PROVINCES AND CITIES

02 Detailed analysis by component

A

COMPONENT 1 Information access

5.25 /10

RANK 11 / 34 · +0.46

OVERVIEW

Overall, Dak Lak has a reasonably solid awareness base on FTAs and on the quality of information supplied to firms: knowledge of FTAs ranks **9th**, while quality of information relative to business needs and frequency of participation in FTA-related events both rank **8th** nationally. The weak point lies in the quality of FTA information provided by local authorities and in forecasting and import-export market-orientation information.

BY FIRM TYPE

The differences across firm groups lie mainly in the quality of information they can reach. Large, FDI and state-owned firms sit closer to official channels — seminars, training, websites and agency notices — which makes it easier to keep up with regulations and market signals. Small firms depend more on the press, mass media and social networks; these deliver speed but rarely the depth an export decision needs.

Dak Lak 5.25

National average 4.79

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#4 Sources of information on FTA-related events

#8 Quality of FTA information relative to business needs

#9 Knowledge of FTAs

#29 Authorities providing FTA information

#31 Quality of forecasting and market-orientation information from local authorities



COMPONENT 2

Implementation of Legal Documents

5.34 /10

RANK 18 / 34 · +0.14

OVERVIEW

Dak Lak has a reasonably stable base of FTA-related legal support: frequency of guidance on legal documents and frequency of firm participation in training both rank **12th**, quality of guidance ranks **13th**, while enterprise policy feedback and local authorities' uptake of that feedback also sit in the upper group. Understanding of the legal documents, however, ranks **19th** — below the support indicators, pointing to a need to help firms understand more deeply the rules that bear directly on exports.

BY FIRM TYPE

Large firms generally understand legal documents better and access guidance more regularly, which gives them an advantage in handling FTA-related legal requirements. Small firms typically remain at a basic level of understanding, or none at all, particularly on technical content such as ROO, SPS, TBT, intellectual property and trade remedies. FDI firms have initial awareness but not necessarily depth, while private domestic firms show fairly uneven access.

Dak Lak 5.34

National average 5.21

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#10 Complexity of compliance with legal documents

#11 Frequency of enterprise feedback on legal documents related to FTA commitments

#13 Quality of guidance on legal documents

#14 Uptake of enterprise feedback by local authorities

#19 Understanding of legal documents



COMPONENT 3

Policies Supporting Enterprises' FTA Utilisation

6.78 /10

RANK 8 / 34 · +0.96

OVERVIEW

Dak Lak is assessed as having a relatively effective support system: effectiveness of support policies and programmes implemented by local authorities ranks **7th**, need for FTA support programmes and policies ranks **5th**, while participation in and quality of trade promotion programmes rank **9th** and **10th**. FTA utilisation, however, ranks only **29th**, exposing the gap between policy support and firms' ability to convert it into actual FTA use.

BY FIRM TYPE

Tariff preferences and rules of origin remain the most widely used provisions, especially among large and state-owned firms. Trade remedies, intellectual property and environmental commitments are exploited far less, since they demand deeper technical capacity and market knowledge. Small firms face more barriers — above all a lack of market information, difficulty finding partners, and limited capacity to meet ROO or technical standards.

Dak Lak 6.78

National average 5.82

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#3 Barriers to FTA utilisation

#5 Need for FTA support programmes and policies

#12 Access to competitiveness support policies

#13 FTA commitments utilised

#29 FTA utilisation



OVERVIEW

Dak Lak records a relatively positive result on this component, with firms treating sustainability requirements as part of production and export activity. Firms' perceived importance of complying with sustainable development commitments ranks **9th**, alongside readiness to comply at **10th** and forms of support at **11th** nationally. Detailed knowledge of sustainable development commitments, perceived impact, and support effectiveness nonetheless remain closer to the middle of the field.

BY FIRM TYPE

Larger firms, and those with regular links to export markets, find it easier to track standards, prepare documentation and meet buyer requirements. Small firms and private domestic firms may struggle more where traceability, environmental or supply-chain standards demand additional cost, data and management capacity.

Dak Lak

6.68

National average

5.97

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#9 Perceived importance of compliance with import-market sustainable development commitments

#10 Readiness to comply with sustainable development commitments

#11 Forms of support for compliance with sustainable development commitments

#17 Perceived impact of sustainable development commitments

#18 Effectiveness of support from local authorities

03 Conclusions & implications

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

- **A relatively balanced FTA implementation base:** Dak Lak has built a fairly even footing across information, legal implementation, support policy and sustainable development.
- **Positive signals from the business support system:** the support-policy component is the standout pillar, reflecting relatively clear provincial activity on training, trade promotion, policy feedback and compliance support.
- **Firms are paying more attention to sustainability:** firms have begun to treat sustainability requirements as part of production and export activity. That is a notable advantage for a province built on agricultural exports, as import markets place ever more weight on traceability, environment and supply-chain standards.

CRITICAL AREAS TO IMPROVE

- **Actual FTA utilisation needs to improve:** Although Dak Lak's support system is rated fairly positively, reported FTA utilisation does not match it — FTA utilisation ranks **29th**.
- **Capacity to apply specialised commitments remains uneven:** Understanding of the legal documents ranks **19th**, below the guidance and training indicators.
- **The impact of sustainability rules is not yet fully recognised:** Although firms rate the importance of sustainability compliance fairly highly, the perceived impact of those commitments and the effectiveness of support remain only middling.

What to do next

NOW • 0–12 MONTHS

NEXT • 1–3 YEARS

1

Improve market forecasting information

Periodic bulletins for coffee, pepper and agricultural exports covering prices, import demand, market standards and sustainability requirements.

Pillar A • 11th → higher

2

Help firms use FTAs in practice

More specific guidance on rules of origin, C/O, documentation for tariff preferences, and how to select FTA markets.

Pillar B • 18th → higher

3

Tie trade promotion to key export sectors

Design promotion by product group — coffee, pepper, agricultural produce — combining market information, partner matching and import-market technical requirements.

Pillar C • 8th → higher

4

Consolidate sustainable development support

Continue supporting firms on traceability, environmental standards, certification and supply-chain requirements, to hold the advantage in high-standard markets.

Pillar D • 16th → higher



TARGET

Move from the “Fair” tier to “Good” — convert the existing support base into deeper, broader FTA utilisation tied directly to Dak Lak's agricultural export strengths.