

Hue

Provincial performance in implementing Free Trade Agreements

Average

BAND 5 OF 6

PERFORMANCE TIER

Average

Band 5 of 6 — **28th of 34** assessed provinces and cities.

OVERALL SCORE

15.55

 / 40

Below the national average of 21.66 by **6.11 points**.

WEAKEST PILLAR

27 / 34

Sustainable development — the widest gap of the four pillars (**-2.23**).

FOUR PILLARS AT A GLANCE

A INFORMATION ACCESS

RANK 25 / 34

3.54

 / 10 **-1.25 vs national average**

B LEGAL IMPLEMENTATION

RANK 30 / 34

3.18

 / 10 **-2.03 vs national average**

C SUPPORT POLICIES

RANK 25 / 34

5.29

 / 10 **-0.53 vs national average**

D SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RANK 27 / 34

3.74

 / 10 **-2.23 vs national average**

★ KEY RELATIVE STRENGTHS

- #7** C3 — FTA utilisation activities
- #10** A3 — Channels through which enterprises access information on FTAs
- #11** C1 — Utilization of specific FTAs
- #12** A2 — Authorities providing FTA information

CRITICAL AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

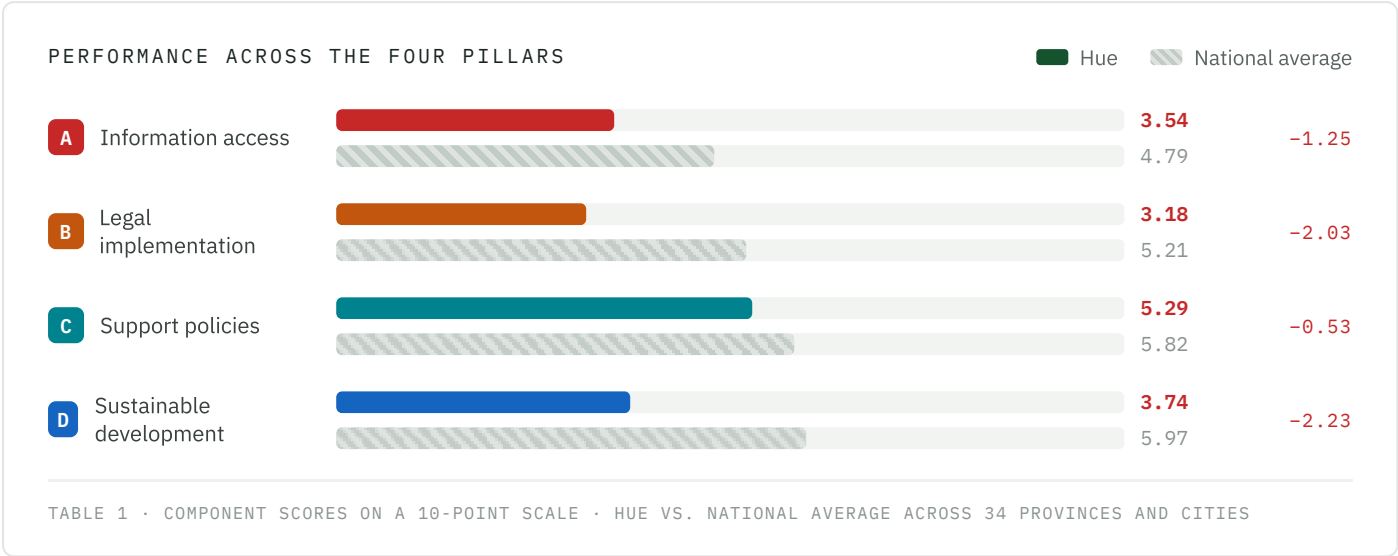
- #31** D2 — Perceived impact of sustainable development commitments
- #30** D4 — Effectiveness of support from local authorities
- #30** B6 — Frequency of enterprise feedback on legal documents
- #29** B2 — Frequency of local-authority guidance on legal documents

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

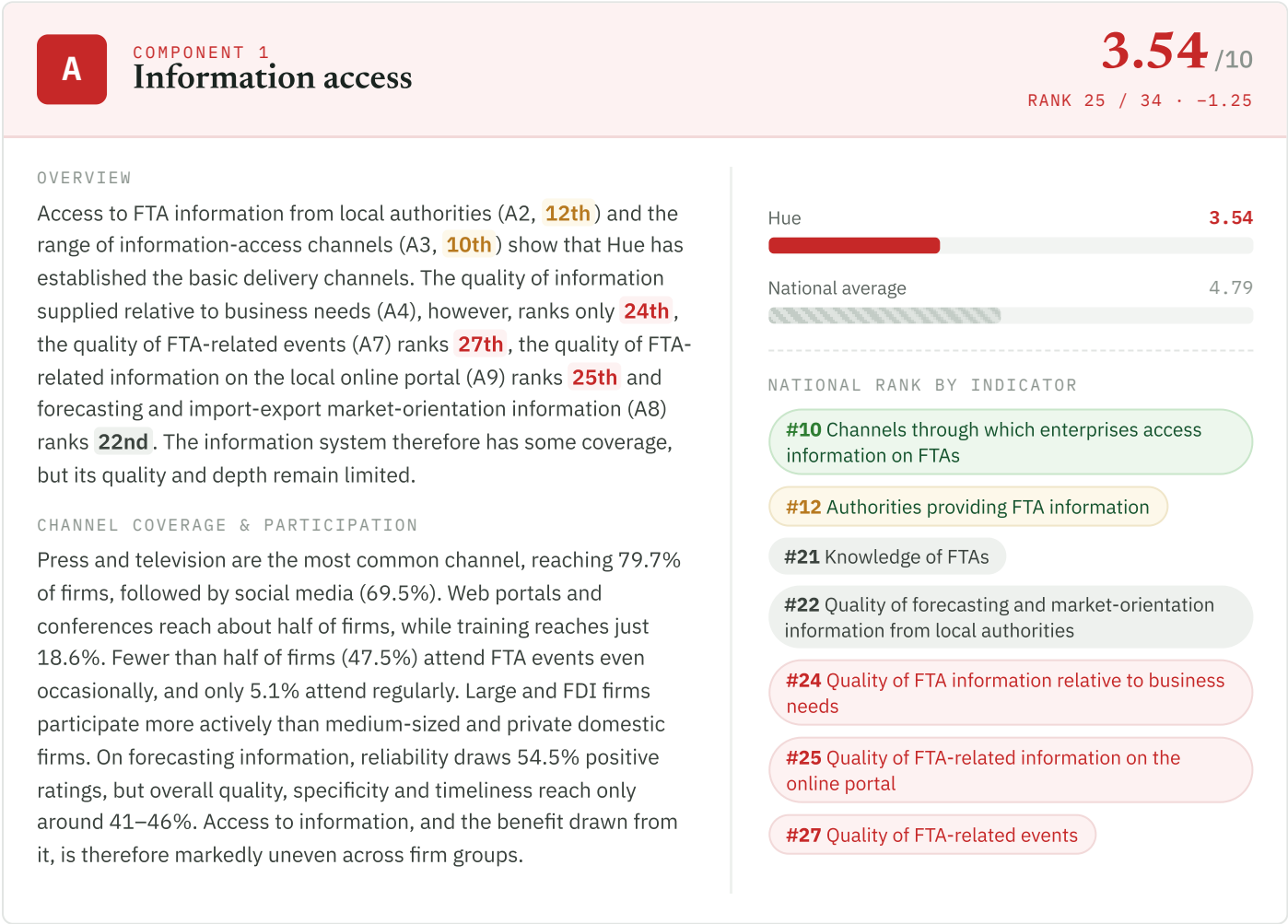
Hue scored 15.55 out of 40, placing it in the “Average” tier and ranking **28th of 34** provinces and cities — below the national average by **6.11 points**. The result reveals a clear paradox: firms exploit FTAs on their own initiative, with FTA utilisation (C1) ranking **11th** and the range of FTA utilisation activities (C3) ranking **7th**, yet the institutional support system has not developed to match. The widest gaps sit in sustainable development (**-2.23** points) and legal

implementation (-2.03 points). Policy priority should fall on raising the quality of guidance on legal documents, widening trade promotion, and building capacity to meet sustainable development requirements.



02

Detailed analysis by component





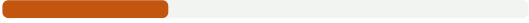
OVERVIEW

This is one of Hue's weakest pillars. Understanding of the legal documents (B1), frequency of guidance on those documents (B2) and complexity of compliance (B4) all rank **29th**, while enterprise participation in policy feedback and consultation (B6) ranks **30th**. Even the better-performing indicators — the quality of guidance (B3) and participation in training (B5) — reach only **24th**. Legal knowledge, frequency of support and firm participation all fall short of what FTA implementation requires.

DEPTH OF UNDERSTANDING BY AREA

Only about 14–31% of firms have a clear grasp of each main legal area, while 56–72% know nothing or hold only a basic understanding. The widest gaps are in intellectual property and SPS; FDI firms also score low across most areas. Just 12–27% of firms receive guidance regularly, and not a single FDI firm reports regular guidance on SPS, TBT, intellectual property or trade remedies. Meanwhile some 66–85% of firms rate the rules as fairly complex. SPS, TBT, labour, environmental and recently incorporated domestic requirements therefore remain a substantial burden.

Hue **3.18**



National average 5.21



NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

- #24 Quality of guidance on legal documents
- #24 Frequency of participation in training on legal documents
- #27 Uptake of enterprise feedback by local authorities
- #29 Understanding of legal documents
- #29 Frequency of local-authority guidance on legal documents
- #29 Complexity of compliance with legal documents
- #30 Frequency of enterprise feedback on legal documents



OVERVIEW

This pillar captures Hue's FTA paradox most sharply. Self-assessed FTA utilisation (C1) ranks **11th** and the range of FTA utilisation activities (C3) ranking **7th** — among the best results relative to the national average. Access to support policies (C6), the effectiveness of support policies and programmes implemented by local authorities (C7) and the quality of trade promotion (C9.2) all rank only **29th**. Firms are exploiting FTAs largely through their own capabilities, while the local support system has yet to produce any clear enabling effect.

UTILISATION MIX & BARRIERS

FTA utilization remains concentrated in tariff preferences (84.7%) and rules of origin (61.0%), followed by trade facilitation (33.9%). However, substantial capability gaps persist: 52.5% of enterprises lack information on FTA markets, 49.2% do not clearly understand FTA commitments, and 42.4% struggle to identify and access potential partners. Constraints also vary across enterprise groups: FDI enterprises face greater difficulties meeting rules-of-origin requirements and technical standards in FTA markets, while small and domestic private enterprises encounter broader limitations in information, technology, finance, and market access. Trade-promotion programs have yet to generate meaningful commercial outcomes, with only 27–30% of enterprises assessing program relevance and supporting materials positively and just 9.1% reporting tangible benefits, such as identifying partners or signing contracts; notably, no small or medium-sized enterprise reports a positive commercial outcome from participation.

Hue 5.29

National average 5.82

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#7 FTA utilisation activities

#11 FTA utilisation

#18 Barriers to FTA utilisation

#29 Access to competitiveness support policies

#29 Effectiveness of support policies and programmes implemented by local authorities

#29 Quality of trade promotion programmes



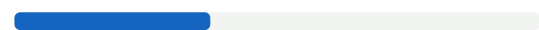
OVERVIEW

This is Hue's weakest pillar. The forms of support (D6) ranks **32nd**, perceived impact on business operations (D2) ranks **31st**, the effectiveness of support from local authorities (D4) ranks **30th**, understanding of the commitments (D1) ranks **29th** and readiness to comply (D3) ranks **28th**. The best result is the perceived importance of complying with import-market sustainable development commitments (D5), at **19th**. Firms have begun to recognise why compliance matters but lack the knowledge, preparation and support to turn that recognition into action.

AWARENESS & SUPPORT COVERAGE

Understanding of the labour and environmental commitments reaches only about 33–35%, and falls to 15–25% for forest management, EUDR, CBAM and other specialised requirements. Firms report significant impact mainly on environment (23.7%) and EUDR (22%), while CBAM registers just 6.9%. Local support is rated best on environmental compliance (59.3%) but reaches only around 34–46% across most specialised areas. Some 42–48% of firms report receiving no support at all on CBAM, fisheries and forest management. The gap matters most for seafood, wood and textile exporters.

Hue 3.74



National average 5.97



NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#19 Perceived importance of compliance with import-market sustainable development commitments**#28** Readiness to comply with sustainable development commitments**#29** Understanding of sustainable development commitments**#30** Effectiveness of support from local authorities**#31** Perceived impact of sustainable development commitments**#32** Forms of support for compliance with sustainable development commitments

03 Conclusions & implications

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

- **Firms exploit FTAs on their own initiative**, with FTA utilisation ranking **11th** and forms of utilisation ranking **7th**, despite a thin support system.
- **The basic information channels are in place**, with access to information from local authorities ranking **12th** and the range of information-access channels ranking **10th**.
- **Firms have begun to recognise why meeting sustainability requirements matters** (D5, **19th**), giving a base on which to build readiness in the next phase.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Legal implementation sits near the bottom of the table**, with firms lacking regular guidance, practical advice and opportunities to feed into policy.
- **The support policy system is not yet effective**, with policy access, support effectiveness and trade promotion quality all ranking **#29**.
- **Sustainable development is the most urgent gap**, with support quality ranking **#32**, perceived impact ranking **#31** and the effectiveness of support from local authorities ranking **#30**.

Action agenda

build institutional support to match the level of firm engagement

NOW • 0–12 MONTHS

NEXT • 1–3 YEARS

1 Raise the quality of legal support

Provide regular, practical, sector-specific guidance on SPS, TBT, rules of origin, intellectual property, and labour and environmental rules.

Pillar B • 30th → improve rank

2 Deploy a support system with clear accountability

Build FTA support programmes with named focal points and defined responsibilities; step up trade promotion for textile, seafood and wood-product firms.

Pillar C • 30th → improve rank

3 Build a dedicated sustainable development programme

Help firms meet labour, environmental, traceability, CITES sustainable forest management and supply chain due diligence requirements under EVFTA and CPTPP.

Pillar D • 32nd → improve rank

4 Establish a city-level FTA focal point

Create a single point of contact for legal guidance, policy access, trade promotion and sustainability support, so firms reach the right programme and the right agency.

Goal: an FTA focal point



TARGET

Lift Hue from the “Average” tier to “Fair” by building institutional support capacity to match how actively firms already use FTAs