

Thanh Hoa

Provincial performance in implementing Free Trade Agreements

Good

BAND 2 OF 6

PERFORMANCE TIER

Good

Band 2 of 6 — 3rd of 34 provinces and cities assessed.

OVERALL SCORE

30.93 / 40

9.27 points above the national average (21.66).

STRONGEST PILLAR

2 / 34

Support policies — all four pillars sit in the national top 5.

FOUR PILLARS AT A GLANCE

A INFORMATION ACCESS

RANK 3 / 34

7.13 / 10

+2.34 vs average

B LEGAL IMPLEMENTATION

RANK 4 / 34

7.49 / 10

+2.28 vs average

C SUPPORT POLICIES

RANK 2 / 34

7.40 / 10

+1.58 vs average

D SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

RANK 4 / 34

8.27 / 10

+2.30 vs average

★ CORE STRENGTHS

- #2 A9 / Pillar C — Quality of FTA-related information on the online portal / Support Policies
- #2 D5 — Perceived importance of compliance with import-market sustainable development commitments
- #3 A1 / A7 / C6 — Knowledge of FTAs / Quality of FTA-related events / Access to competitiveness support policies
- #4 A2/A4/A5/B3/B5/C7/C9.2 — a broad group of top-ranked indicators

DISTANCE TO THE LEADING GROUP

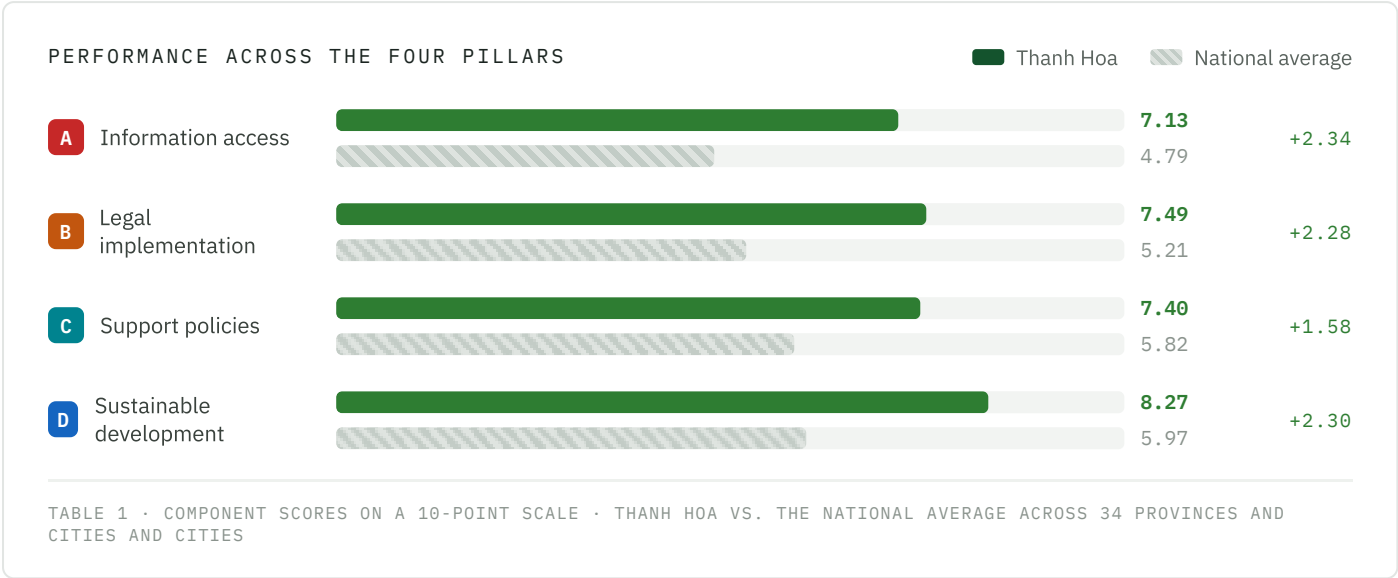
- Rank 15 A8 — Quality of forecasting and market-orientation information from local authorities
- Rank 15 C3 — FTA utilisation activities
- Rank 17 D2 — Perceived impact of sustainable development commitments
- Rank 18 A6 — Sources of information on FTA-related events

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

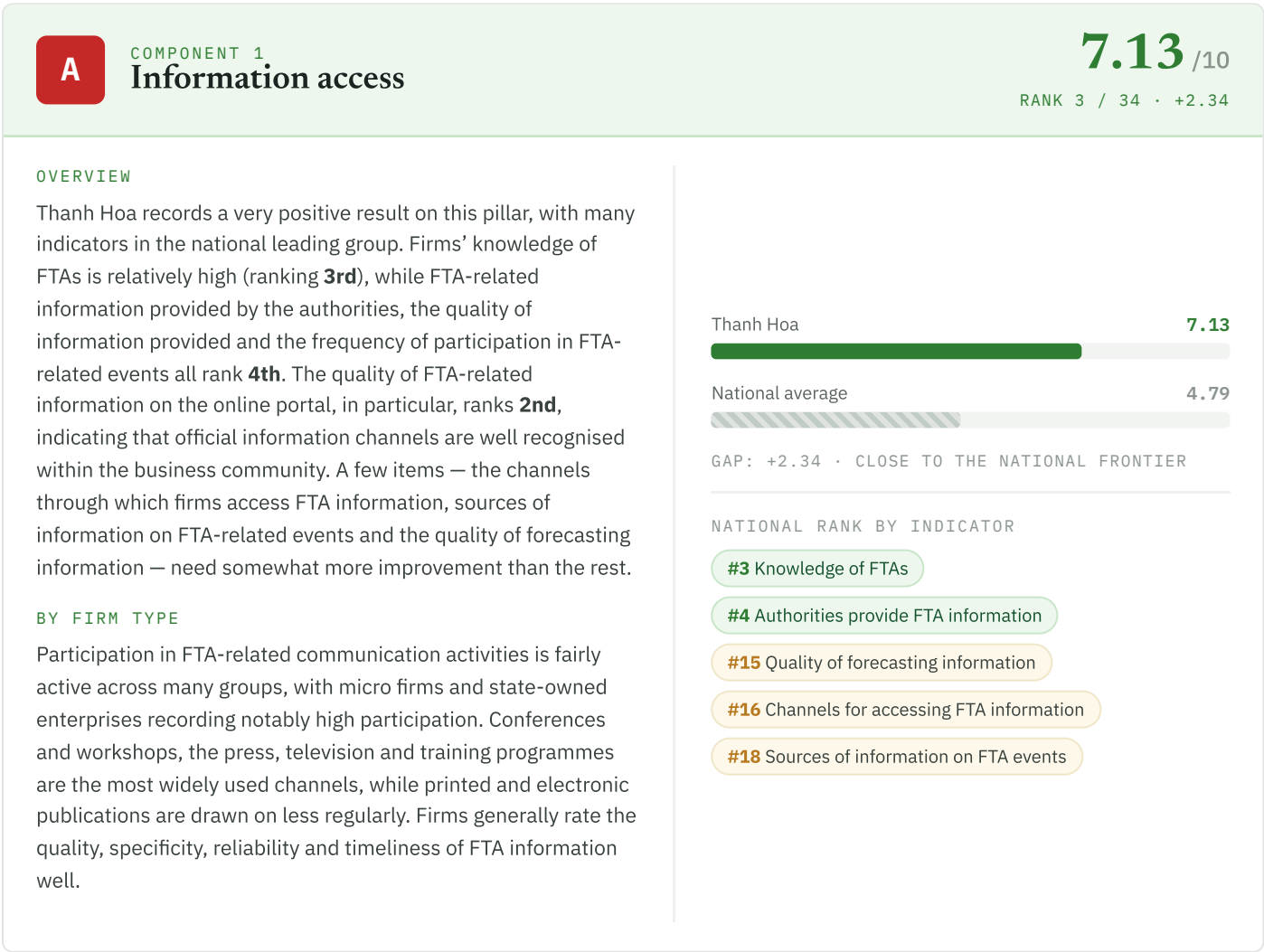
01 Overview of results

Thanh Hoa scores **30.93 out of 40**, ranking **3rd of 34**, and falls in the **Good** band. The province sits 9.27 points above the national average (21.66), pointing to a relatively comprehensive and stable record on FTA implementation. Notably, Thanh Hoa is in the leading group on all four pillars: information access ranks **3rd**, legal implementation ranks **4th**, support policies rank **2nd** and sustainable development ranks **4th** nationally. With its industrial and export base and sectors such as oil refining, textiles, footwear and agricultural products, Thanh Hoa should concentrate on consolidating

its existing advantages while closing the remaining gaps on items such as market forecasting and orientation information and the range of FTA utilisation activities.



02 Detailed analysis by component



OVERVIEW

Thanh Hoa shows solid legal support capacity, not only in providing information but also in accompanying firms as they apply the rules. Guidance, training and responsiveness from local authorities all sit in the leading group, lowering the cost of understanding the rules and the compliance risk firms face. Firms' understanding of the legal documents, however, lags behind several of the support indicators, indicating a need for deeper knowledge of sector-specific rules.

BY FIRM TYPE

Areas tied directly to commercial benefit — tariff preferences and rules of origin — are absorbed better, particularly among large firms and state-owned enterprises. Technical commitments such as SPS, TBT, intellectual property, trade remedies, labour and the environment are still understood unevenly, especially among small firms and domestic private firms.

Thanh Hoa **7.49**

National average **5.21**

GAP: +2.28 · WELL-DEVELOPED LEGAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#4 Quality of guidance on legal documents

#4 Participation in training on legal documents

#5 Uptake of enterprise feedback by local authorities

#7 Complexity of compliance with legal documents

#9 Understanding of legal documents



COMPONENT 3

Policies supporting firms in utilising FTAs

7.40 /10

RANK 2 / 34 · +1.58

OVERVIEW

Thanh Hoa is in the leading group thanks to a fairly coherent enterprise support system. Access to support policies ranks **3rd**, while policy effectiveness and the quality of trade promotion programmes both rank **4th**, indicating that support activities are reasonably well matched to firms' needs for competitiveness and market expansion. Utilisation of the FTAs Vietnam has signed ranks **6th** and the FTA commitments utilised ranks **10th**, reflecting a substantive base of FTA use. The main room for improvement lies in diversifying the activities through which firms utilise FTAs, currently ranked **15th**, so that firms can go deeper into technical commitments, market standards and partner-matching opportunities.

BY FIRM TYPE

FTA utilisation remains concentrated in tariff preferences and rules of origin. Technical or newer commitments such as TBT, SPS, intellectual property, labour, the environment and trade remedies are used less frequently. The remaining barriers relate to reaching partners in FTA markets and a shortage of market information, particularly for small firms and FDI firms.

Thanh Hoa **7.40**

National average **5.82**

GAP: +1.58 · EFFECTIVE SUPPORT

NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR

#3 Access to competitiveness support policies

#4 Quality of trade promotion programmes

#5 Participation in trade promotion programmes

#10 FTA commitments utilised

#15 FTA utilisation activities



COMPONENT 4

Sustainable development commitments

8.27 /10

RANK 4 / 34 · +2.30

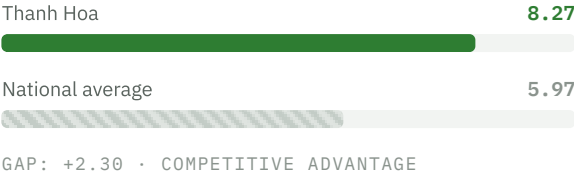
OVERVIEW

Thanh Hoa has a good base for turning sustainability requirements into an export advantage. The indicator on the importance of sustainability compliance for firms' operations

ranks **2nd**, showing that firms see compliance not merely as an obligation but as bound up with competitiveness and market access. Understanding of sustainable development commitments and the forms of support available both rank **5th**, while readiness to comply and the effectiveness of support also sit in the positive range. The item to improve is the perceived impact of sustainability commitments, currently ranked **17th**, so that firms can see more concretely how these requirements bear on costs, orders and market standards.

BY FIRM TYPE

Large firms and FDI firms are better informed about sustainability requirements, particularly on biodiversity, forest management, marine resources, EUDR, CBAM and CSDDD. Micro firms and domestic private firms in the province, by contrast, are unclear about these newer and highly technical frameworks. Most firms expect the impact of sustainability commitments to be low to moderate, which puts Thanh Hoa in a position to convert existing awareness and readiness into a genuine compliance advantage.



NATIONAL RANK BY INDICATOR



03 Conclusions & implications

STRENGTHS TO BUILD ON

- **A relatively comprehensive FTA implementation base:** Thanh Hoa sits in the leading group on all four pillars, indicating that implementation capacity has developed fairly evenly across information, legal support, support policies and sustainable development.
- **The enterprise support system works reasonably well:** legal guidance, training, policy access and trade promotion have helped firms lower the cost of understanding the rules, raise compliance capacity and widen market opportunities.
- **Sustainable development can become a competitive advantage:** firms already see sustainability compliance as tied to competitiveness and market access — particularly important for export sectors such as textiles, footwear and industrial manufacturing.

CRITICAL AREAS TO IMPROVE

- **Forecasting and market-orientation information needs greater depth:** Thanh Hoa should add sector-level bulletins, analysis and market alerts so that firms can respond faster to shifts in FTA markets.
- **The range of FTA utilisation activities needs to widen:** firms still draw mainly on familiar benefits such as tariff preferences and rules of origin; the next step is to extend into technical commitments, market standards, labour, the environment and partner matching.
- **The economic payoff from sustainability compliance needs to be made clearer:** firms need to see more concretely how sustainable development affects costs, orders, customer requirements and the ability to retain export markets.

Next steps

NOW · 0-12 MONTHS

NEXT · 1-3 YEARS

1 Raise the quality of market forecasting

Provide sector-specific bulletins for textiles, footwear, oil refining and agriculture on changing conditions in FTA markets.

2 Diversify how firms utilise FTAs

Guide firms to exploit FTAs beyond tariff preferences and rules of origin.

3 Turn sustainability into an export advantage

Make the economic payoff of sustainability compliance explicit through concrete examples on orders, compliance costs, customer

4 Maintain an integrated FTA support desk

Connect information, legal guidance, trade promotion and sustainability support through one clear point of contact so firms can reach and use it more regularly.

A8 • Rank 15 → top
5

C3 • Rank 15 → top
10

requirements, certification
and market retention.

D2 • Rank 17 → top
10

Maintain and scale

TARGET



Move up from the “Good” band to “Very good” – so that Thanh Hoa not only holds its place in the leading group but becomes a reference province for supporting FTA implementation and utilisation.