

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asian countries view tourism as a means to generate income and employment (Trupp & Dolezal, 2020).

Competition in the tourism industry in the Southeast Asia region has become a crucial factor as countries within the region strive to attract tourists and develop revenue sources.

## 2. METHODS

The method of desk study: Research materials, survey reports and situation reports by individuals and organizations within ASEAN countries are collected and synthesized.

The data derived from biennial The World Economic Forum report in 2020 were produced from 2019 data base.

## 3. RESULTS

**Table 1.** Ranking tourism and travel competitiveness in Southeast Asia

Countries	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	
Singapore	6.0	6.4	5.6	5.6	6.1	6.1	4.8	5.0	4.3	2.2	2.5	(1) Business Environment,
Malaysia	5.5	5.9	5.3	5.4	5.4	4.8	4.5	6.3	4.0	3.8	2.6	(2) Safety & Security,
Thailand	4.9	4.8	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.2	3.9	5.8	3.6	4.8	2.6	(3) Health & Hygiene,
Indonesia	4.7	5.4	4.5	4.9	4.7	5.9	4.3	6.2	3.5	4.5	3.2	(4) Human Resources & Labor Market,
Vietnam	4.4	5.6	5.0	4.8	4.3	4.1	3.7	5.9	3.8	3.8	2.9	(5) ICT Readiness,
Brunei	4.8	6.1	5.5	4.6	5.4	3.4	3.7	6.6	4.1	2.4	1.1	(6) Prioritization of Travel & Tourism,
Philippines	4.3	3.6	4.8	5.0	4.4	4.9	3.5	5.9	4.0	3.8	1.8	(7) International Openness,
Laos	4.4	5.3	4.5	4.6	3.4	4.8	3.0	5.9	3.7	2.9	1.3	(8) Price Competitiveness,
Cambodia	3.8	5.1	4.0	4.2	3.9	5.0	3.5	5.6	3.4	3.0	1.6	(9) Environmental Sustainability,
												(10) Natural Resources,
												(11) Cultural Resources and Business Travel.

Source: The World Economic Forum, 2019

In 2019, Southeast Asia receiving 143.1 million international tourists, with the countries hosting the largest number of international visitors being Thailand (39.8 million international tourists), Malaysia (26.1 million international tourists), and Singapore (19.1 million international tourists)

## 4. DISCUSSION

The Philippines had the fastest rate of improvement (75th).

Singapore had the greatest percentage decline in score but remains the region's most competitive tourism country (17th).

Cambodia remains the lowest scorer in South-East Asia (98th).

Thailand has SouthEast Asia's largest tourism and travel GDP (31st).

Vietnam's tourism rising from the 75th position out of 141 economies in 2015 to 67th out of 136 in 2017 and further improving to 63rd out of 140 in 2019.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Despite South-East Asia's strengths, the region does face several challenges. Many countries suffer from high air pollution, water stress, below-average levels of wastewater treatment, endangered wildlife and forest loss.

In order to maintain and increase its market share in the tourism sector, Vietnam needs to uphold and enhance the quality of tourism services, conserve and develop tourism resources sustainably, and continually explore new opportunities within the tourism industry.