

Introduction

Objectives

The main objective of the *Government at a Glance* series has been to provide reliable, internationally comparable data on government activities and their results in OECD member countries. By broadening the scope to other regions in the world, such as Southeast Asia (SEA), this publication allows countries to benchmark their own governments' performance within the region and in relation to the OECD. In addition, it allows governments to track both their own and international developments over time and provides evidence to their public policy making. This publication covers the ten Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, as well as the four OECD countries in their proximity – Australia, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.

Indicators on government activities and public management practices

Southeast Asian countries are interested in collecting information to identify how public governance and, more specifically, public management practices contribute to a government's ability to achieve its objectives. *Government at a Glance Southeast Asia 2019* is built on the following framework, which describes the public “production” process and identifies five types of indicators: 1) contextual factors, 2) inputs, 3) processes, 4) outputs and outcomes.

Contextual factors

Annex C presents contextual information describing some key features of the political and administrative structure of the ten countries included in the publication. Situating policies and indicators within this contextual background can help us to better understand differences among countries, and identify those with similar structures that might serve as better comparators for benchmarking purposes.

Inputs

Input indicators include data on government revenues, expenditures, employment and workforce characteristics. These are the main components of the inputs to government production function and provide insight into the incentives and constraints that governments face in determining what types of goods and services to provide. Furthermore, these data allow for a comparison of the proportion of the economy devoted to producing different goods and services, as well as the difference in the mix of inputs used for production. For instance, as labour is a key input in the government production process, the size of the public sector may affect government productivity and its capacity to provide goods and services.

Processes

Process indicators refer to the public management practices and procedures undertaken by governments to implement policies. They describe how governments implement policies and how inputs are transformed into outputs and outcomes. This first edition for the region contains information on processes such as budgeting, human resource management, digital and open government practices. This allows countries to evaluate the effects of recent reforms, and identify new strategies to improve

their performance. For example, effective human resource management is key for aligning people management with the strategic goals of public sector organisations. Digital government can improve government efficiency and effectiveness; it can also increase public trust by using new technologies to boost the quality and tailor the provision of public services to citizens' needs. Finally, the openness, usefulness and reusability of public data can create new business opportunities and inform citizen engagement as well as improve the government decision-making process.

Indicators of outputs and outcomes

The dividing line between outputs and outcomes can be blurry. While outputs refer to the amount of goods and services produced by governments, outcomes show the effects of policies and practices on citizens and businesses. The success of a given policy should be measured at a first stage by outputs, but should ultimately be judged by the outcomes it achieves. Broadly speaking, outcomes refer to the effects of public programmes and services for citizens, inclusive of gains in terms of welfare, health and educational/learning. While these outcomes can be affected by the quality of programmes and services provided, other factors such as the socio-economic background of the population and individual behavioural factors may also have an impact.

In *Government at a Glance Southeast Asia 2019*, measures of outputs and outcomes are described in the Serving Citizens chapter (Chapter 7). This chapter follows a sectoral approach to measuring outputs and outcomes of public sector activities. Based on a consolidated framework developed horizontally with other OECD directorates and in collaboration with OECD countries, the chapter provides measures of services to citizens in terms of access, responsiveness and quality. This publication focuses on three sectors: health care, education and the judicial system.

Structure

Government at a Glance Southeast Asia 2019 starts with a policy chapter on the region's goal to achieve citizen-centric public services and how the collected data can illuminate how ready governments are to accomplish that goal. Chapters 2-6 provide data on the following areas of public administration: Public Finance, Public Employment, Budgeting Practices and Procedures, Human Resources Management, Digital and Open Government. Chapter 7 includes available comparative indicators on citizen satisfaction with key public service and aspects of service quality.

All data and indicators are accessible online

All data collected by the OECD Public Governance Directorate for the production of *Government at a Glance Southeast Asia 2019* are available online on the OECD website. Readers interested in using the data presented in this publication for further analysis and research are encouraged to consult the full documentation of definitions, sources and methods presented in the publication and online. This database includes both qualitative and quantitative indicators on public sector inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes.



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