



The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) 2016

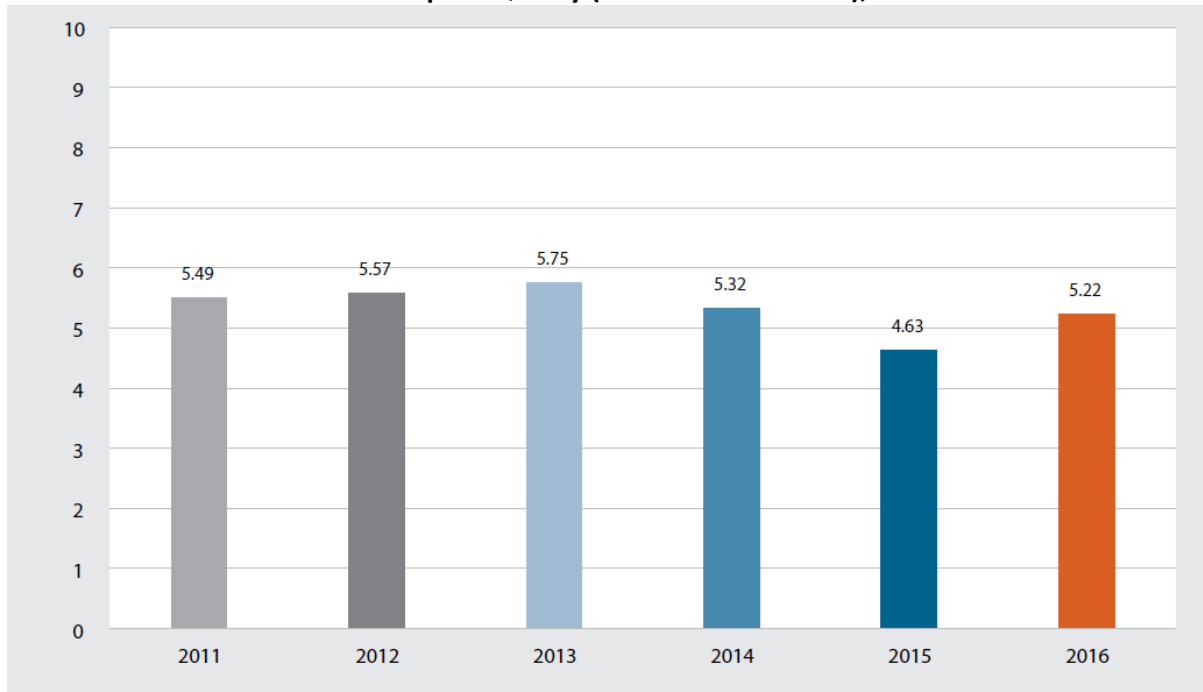
Dimension 6: Public Service Delivery

The 'Public Service Delivery' dimension looks at four public services: health care, primary education, basic infrastructure, and residential law and order. Similar to previous PAPI surveys, citizens were asked about their direct experience with the accessibility, quality and availability of these services in 2016.

Overall Provincial Performance. Findings from the survey reveal that the majority of provinces have improved their delivery of public services over time. A total of 35 provinces saw some improvement in 2016 compared to 2011, while the rest saw insignificant changes. Dak Nong made the most impressive improvement compared to its 2011 benchmark, with an increase of 22%, and none of the provinces have fallen behind dramatically since 2011. It is clear that this is due to improvement in accessibility to, and quality of, public education and public health care in 2016. Improvement in law and order were minor, while basic infrastructure services appear to have declined quite significantly in 2016.

However, a wider gap between provinces was found in 2016 than in the previous five years. The difference between the best performing province (Da Nang with an overall score of 8.03 points) and the poorest one (Quang Ngai with a score of 6.42) is larger than before. There was also a change in the regional performance landscape: in the previous five years the best performing provinces were concentrated mostly in the South than in other regions of the country, and in 2016, a more even regional distribution in the best performing group is evident. Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City, and Ba Ria-Vung Tau have consistently been in the best performing group since 2011. Ha Noi is the only centrally governed municipality that falls far below this group. Meanwhile, in 2016, Quang Ngai and Quang Ninh replaced Binh Phuoc and Dak Nong as the poorest performers (these two latter provinces were in the poorest performing group for five consecutive years, from 2011-2015).

Public Health Care. This sub-dimension measures the performance of public district hospitals and the quality of public health insurance. The survey shows that user satisfaction with the quality of public hospitals increased substantively in 2016 compared to 2015, though results reveal a large variation between the best and poorest performers, with scores ranging from 8.16 in Soc Trang to 1.9 in Gia Lai. User feedback shows that despite improvements, public district hospitals continue to face problems with patients sharing beds, long waiting times between entering hospitals and receiving treatment, unclean treatment rooms, ineffective treatment resulting in diseases not being cured or injuries not treated properly, and doctors advising that patients purchase medicine at private pharmacies.

Total District Hospital Quality (based on 10 criteria), 2011-2016

However, there was a significant increase in 2016 in citizen access to health insurance: approximately 72.3% of respondents nationwide said they had health insurance, a surge from 61% in 2015. Another encouraging development is that those who have health insurance were relatively positive about the quality of it. In 2016, the nationwide score for the indicator on health insurance quality was the highest of the past six years.

Public Primary Education. The key indicators used to construct this sub-dimension are the distance in kilometres from home to school, the length of time required for children to go to school, and the quality of primary schools. Findings from the 2016 survey show encouraging trends in total quality of primary schools and overall rating of primary schools. The nationwide score for total quality of primary schools increased from 4.75 in 2015 to 4.99 points in 2016, a bit lower than the peak of 5.09 points in 2013. Hai Duong scored highest in total quality primary school performance, at 7.93 points on the 9-point scale, leaving the poorest performer, Quang Ngai, far behind, with only 2.79 points in 2016.

Even for high-performing Hai Duong, the province needs to pay attention to some aspects of primary education, including hygienic conditions of toilets and reducing the number of shifts for primary school children. Since 2011 all provinces have been struggling to meet minimum government quality standards, including the requirements that teachers should not give preferential treatment to students taking extracurricular classes, the maximum number of students in each class should be 36, there should be access to drinking water and clean toilets at schools, and school administrators should inform parents about the school's revenue and budget expenditures. On the rating of total quality of primary schools, there was little difference in 2016 between provinces. Can Tho scored the highest at 4.42 points and Nghe An the lowest at 3.44 points on the 5-point scale.

Basic Infrastructure. Citizen satisfaction with basic infrastructure provided by local governments (access to electricity, quality of roads nearest houses, frequency of garbage collection in residential areas, and quality of drinking water) is captured in this dimension. Mountainous and

Mekong Delta provinces face an ongoing challenge in reaching the level of performance achieved by other, primarily lowland, provinces in this area. For instance, in Dien Bien only 70% of respondents said that their households were using electricity from the national grid, and citizens in Ha Giang reported the fewest percentage of roads constructed of concrete or asphalt. In Hai Phong, almost every household has access to tap water at home, according to respondents, while in Gia Lai this is the case for only 2% of households. In Tien Giang, 79% of respondents said they still had to use unclean water from canals. In terms of garbage collection, in Hai Phong local public solid waste management agencies provided this service most frequently, while in Hau Giang respondents said they had to dispose of garbage themselves.

Law and Order. The levels of safety experienced by citizens in everyday life is reflected by a trio of indicators, namely safety levels in areas where citizens live, changes in safety levels, and crime rates. The 2016 PAPI results indicate minor improvements in law and order at the provincial level since 2011. In 2016, about 14% of respondents nationwide reported they were victims of one of the four types of crime, slightly lower than the level seen in 2015. About 44% of respondents in Kon Tum were victims of a crime, as opposed to about 1% in Lao Cai. Respondents living in Can Tho (the best performing province) felt safer in their residential areas than those living in Khanh Hoa (the lowest performing province).

Recommendations. Provincial performance in public service delivery improved significantly in 2016 thanks primarily to better health insurance coverage, and better quality of public health and primary education facilities and services, as perceived by citizens. In contrast to the overall gains in public service delivery and primary education, basic infrastructure saw a decline in 2016, perhaps due to stagnation in public investment in roads, water supply, and solid waste collection in many provinces. Poorer provinces, especially those in the Northwest and Central Highlands regions, may need to invest more in public services and basic infrastructure and less in large city halls or squares. For Mekong Delta provinces, more attention should be paid to improving the quality of drinking water, especially as the region is facing salt water intrusion and long droughts.

The Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) is a policy monitoring tool that assesses citizen experiences and satisfaction with government performance at the national and sub-national levels in governance, public administration and public service delivery. Since its pilot in 2009, PAPI has directly interviewed 88,962 Vietnamese citizens nationwide.

PAPI measures six dimensions: participation at local levels, transparency, vertical accountability, control of corruption, public administrative procedures and public service delivery. The survey has been implemented nationwide each year since 2011. For the 2016 PAPI Report, 14,063 randomly selected citizens were surveyed.

PAPI is a collaboration between the Centre for Community Support and Development Studies (CECODES), the Centre for Research and Training of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front (VFF-CRT) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC) has generously funded PAPI since 2011, together with funds from UNDP.

The full 2016 PAPI Report and more in-depth analysis can be found at: www.papi.org.vn.