

181,035 sq km
LAND AREA

15.1 million
POPULATION (2015)

Phnom Penh
CAPITAL CITY

Cambodian riel (KHR)
CURRENCY



PHOTO CREDIT: Science News

1.3 Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)

20.7 Urban population (% , 2015)

8.3 Total labor force (million , 2014)

0.2 Unemployment rate (% , 2014)

7.0 Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)

1,158.7 GDP per capita (current USD , 2015)

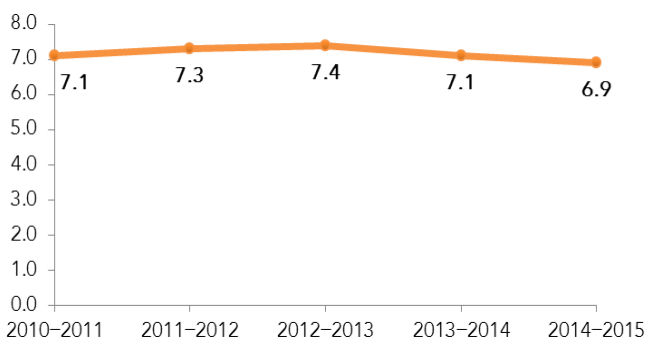
83.2 Foreign direct investments in agriculture (USD million , 2012)

After years of civil unrest and unstable market conditions, Cambodia now has one of the fastest growing economies in Asia (ADB, 2016a). Following more than two decades of strong economic growth, “Asia’s new tiger economy” has attained the lower middle-income status as of 2015, with gross domestic product per capita reaching USD 1,158.7 (World Bank, 2016a).

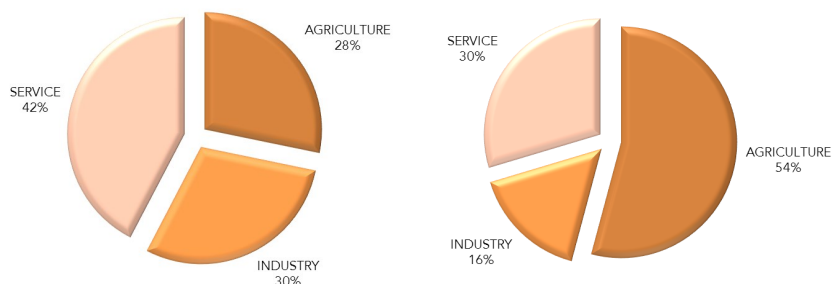
Poverty, however, continues to plague Cambodia, albeit more slowly than in the last few years. In 2014, the poverty rate was 15.5 percent (ADB, 2016b), with around 90 percent of the poor living in the countryside. While Cambodia has achieved in the Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty, numerous families were only able to do so marginally (World Bank, 2016a).

Amidst these challenges, the country’s agriculture, construction, and service sectors remain strong. According to the World Bank (2016b), agriculture is still the main source of income of the majority, as approximately 54 percent of the country’s population relies on farming. Meanwhile, the service industry lends the most contribution to the country’s gross domestic product (ADB, 2016c).

MAJOR INDUSTRIES



Annual GDP growth (%). Cambodia’s overall GDP growth peaked in the 2012–2013 period primarily due to an increase in the country’s garment export industry (ADB, 2016c).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: Cambodia’s service sector tops other sectors in terms of contribution to the country’s GDP output in 2015 (ADB, 2016). Right: More than half of the country’s employed population works in the agriculture sector (World Bank, 2016b).

The World Bank (2016a) explains that while the future looks brighter for Cambodia, the country still faces a number of development challenges including weak public service delivery, ineffective natural resources management, poor environmental sustainability, and the absence of good and accountable governance, among others.

Of chief importance, aside from the adequacy and efficiency of public services, is the ability of the government to generate adequate income for essential public spending and investment requirements, spend the available resources efficiently and accountably, and ensure timely payments for vital public services and public investment procedures. To quote the World Bank (2016a), "addressing this will help...stimulate the agricultural and tourism sectors to once again become strong engines of growth supporting poverty reduction, as well as to expand and sustain growth and promote diversification in the manufacturing sector."

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS



361.2
RICE



77.8
RUBBER



71.8
MOLASSES

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



74.1
BARLEY



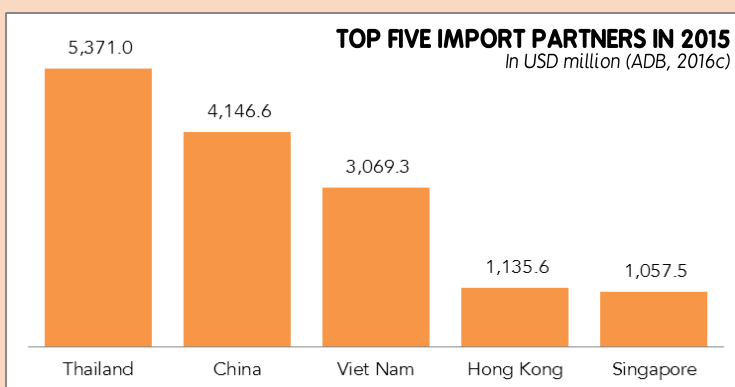
59.9
MALT



56.4
SUGAR

TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016)

DIRECTION OF TRADE



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



ACCESS TO INTERNET



MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



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PR CHINA

9,388,211 sq km
LAND AREA

1,374.6 million
POPULATION (2015)

Beijing
CAPITAL CITY

Renminbi (RMB)
CURRENCY



Photo credits: Dimitra Stasinopoulou

0.5	Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)
55.6	Urban population (% , 2015)
800.9	Total labor force (million , 2015)
4.1	Unemployment rate (% , 2015)
6.9	Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)
7,924.7	GDP per capita (current USD , 2015)
1,700.7	Foreign direct investments on agriculture (USD million , 2010)

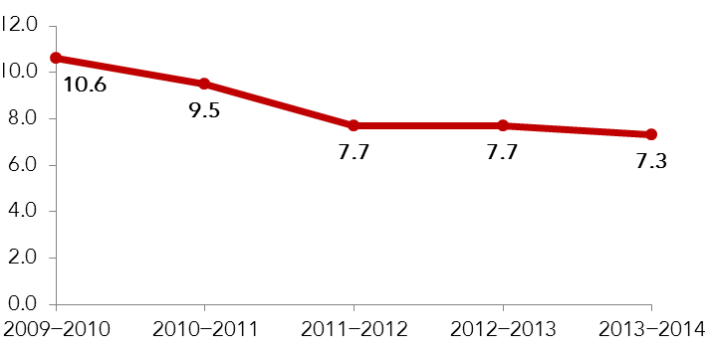
The transformation from centrally-planned to market-based economy three decades ago propelled the People’s Republic of China towards an unparalleled socioeconomic development. With a GDP growth averaging almost 10 percent a year—the fastest by any major economy in history—PR China managed to lift over 800 million people out of poverty, metamorphosing into the upper middle-income country that it is today.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES (Guangxi & Yunnan Provinces)

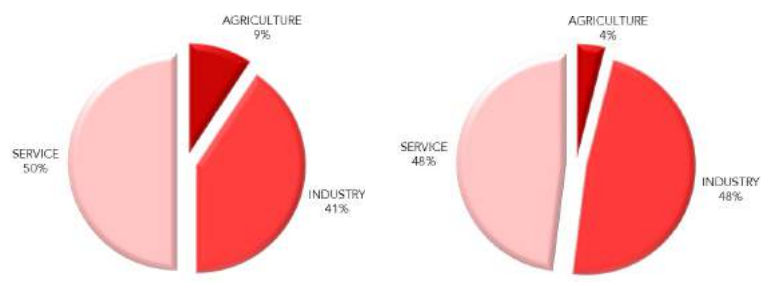
TOBACCO ELECTRONICS VEHICLES AND CAR PARTS METALS/METALLIC ORES ELECTRIC POWER

Placing emphasis on sustainability and innovation, PR China reached all targets set in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and, in the process, assisted the realization of the MDGs globally. Despite a decrease in GDP growth since 2012, PR China’s economy is still relatively strong compared to its global counterparts (World Bank, 2017).

PR China, with its almost 1.4 billion population, is the world’s second largest economy and a major player and influencer in the economic development arena. However, with gradual market reforms, it remains a developing country. PR China’s 2015 poverty standard states that 55 million people residing in rural areas are still poor (World Bank, 2017).



Annual GDP growth (%). Although China’s annual GDP growth rate is still relatively high, it continues to fall over the years (ADB, 2016).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: China’s high GDP output is largely attributed to its growing service sector (ADB, 2016). Right: Nine (9) out of ten (10) Chinese citizens work under service and industry-related businesses. (World Bank, 2016).

The country's fast economic growth came with a high price-various challenges, including the growing gap between the rich and the poor, rapid urbanization, and environmental degradation has since plagued PR China. Apart from these, issues on internal labor migration and an aging population continue to challenge the country's sustainable development. Other obstacles include the implementation of fiscal reforms, improvement of social protection systems, and reform of state-owned enterprises (ADB, 2017).

To sustain PR China's socioeconomic growth, a review and re-adjustment of various policies is imperative. According to studies, it is more difficult to transform from a middle-income to a high-income status than it is to change from a low-income economy to a middle-income one. Addressing these concerns, as stated by World Bank (2017), requires a renewed focus on measures and services tackling social and environmental imbalances.

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS



1,626
GARLIC



1,076.8
SOYBEANS



1,034.9
APPLES

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



65,554.8
SOYBEANS



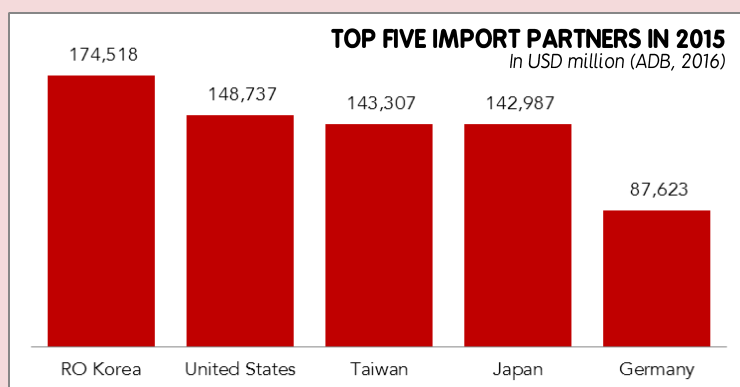
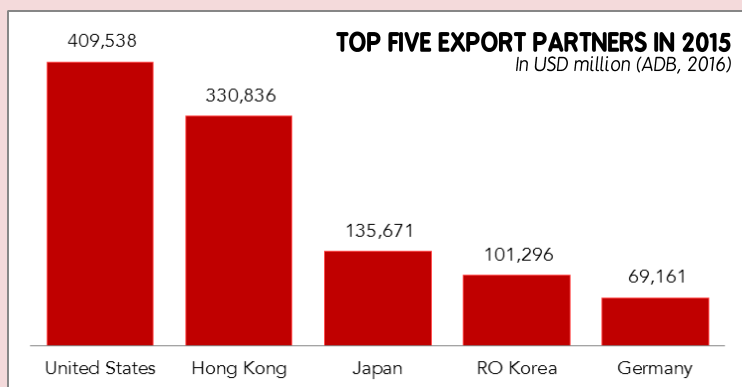
7,388.8
CASSAVA



7,340.7
MAIZE

TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016)

DIRECTION OF TRADE



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



10 out of 10 people

ACCESS TO INTERNET



5 out of 10 people

MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



10 out of 10 people

(ADB, 2016; GMS Program, 2016)

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230,800 sq km
LAND AREA

6.5 million
POPULATION (2015)

Vientiane
CAPITAL CITY

Lao kip (LAK)
CURRENCY



PHOTO CREDIT: PloCoon/IGN

1.4 Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)

38.6 Urban population (% , 2015)

3.0 Total labor force (million, 2010)

1.4 Unemployment rate (% , 2014)

7.0 Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)

1,812.3 GDP per capita (current USD, 2015)

37.1 Foreign direct investments in agriculture (USD million, 2011)

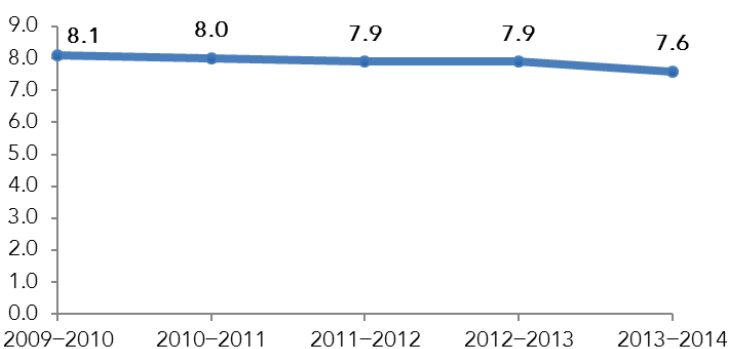
A landlocked country situated at the heart of mainland Southeast Asia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is one of the fastest growing economies in the East Asian region. The increasing use of the country's natural resources—mostly water, minerals, and forests—contributed largely to the country's GDP growth of 7 percent over the last decade (World Bank, 2016a).

With agriculture as majority's main source of income as well as a flourishing service sector, Lao PDR's economy is only expected to rise. However, a plethora of constraints continue to hamper efforts to reduce poverty and improve food security in the country.

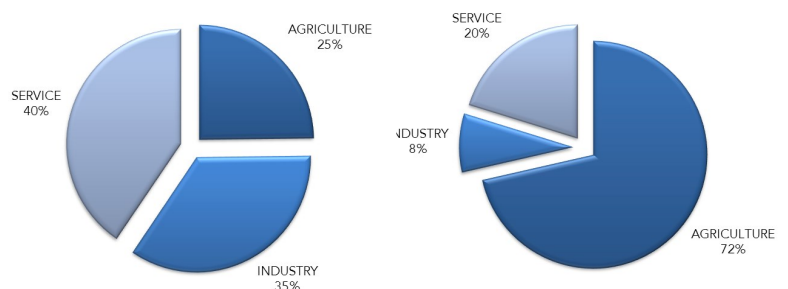
One of the key issues is low agricultural productivity. According to the FAO (2016a), "the country is poorly placed to meet the challenges of either competing with imported produce from neighboring countries, or meeting the increasingly high quality—including food safety—standards demanded by importing countries."

MAJOR INDUSTRIES

- TEXTILES AND GARMENTS
- RUBBER
- ELECTRIC POWER
- TIMBER
- METALS / METALLIC ORES



Annual GDP growth (%). Although Lao PDR's annual GDP growth remains high over the last decade, it gradually slowed down from 2009 until 2014 (ADB, 2016b).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: The service sector remains as the country's leading source of GDP output (ADB, 2016b). Right: Approximately seven out of ten of Lao PDR's employed population do agriculture-related activities for a living (World Bank, 2016b).

Moreover, critical ecological concerns such as rapid deforestation, forest and aquatic resource degradation, and biodiversity loss recently began plaguing the country. Making matters worse is the country's extreme vulnerability to natural disasters (FAO, 2016a).

Despite the expansion of construction and service sectors, as well as the growth of regional integration boosting tourism and foreign investments, reduction of poverty in the country appears to be sluggish compared with its regional peers.

Because Lao PDR is a "resource-rich country heavily reliant on mining and hydropower," diversifying its economy would be necessary. The government needs to strengthen its macroeconomic management strategies, provide a comprehensive fiscal framework, and manage its national budget effectively (ADB, 2016a).

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS



221.8
MAIZE



31.5
COFFEE



15.3
BANANA

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



28.2
SUGAR



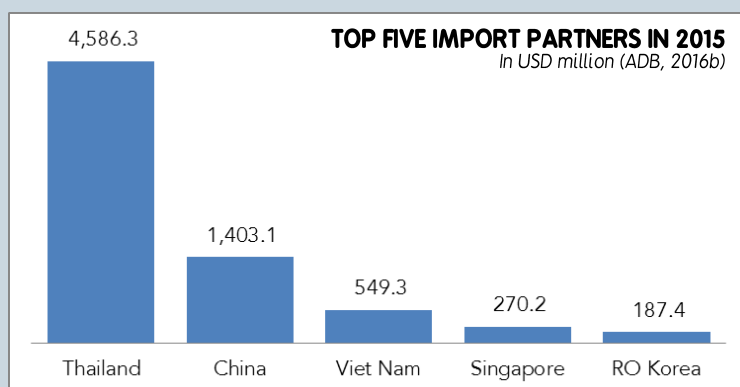
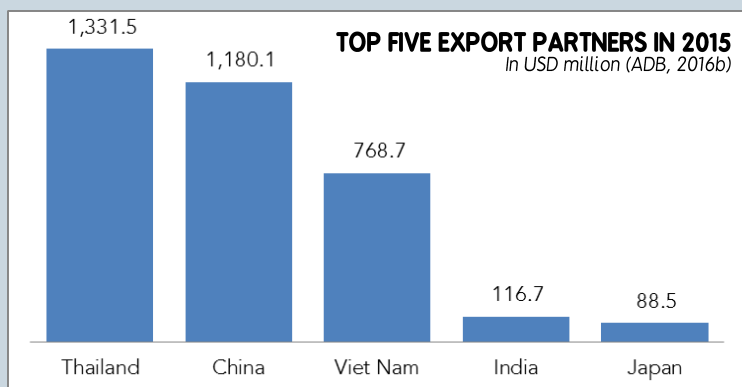
10.9
RICE



6.0
RUBBER

TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016b)

DIRECTION OF TRADE



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

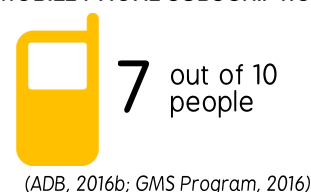
ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



ACCESS TO INTERNET



MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



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653,080 sq km
LAND AREA

52.5 million
POPULATION (2015)

Naypyidaw
CAPITAL CITY

Myanmar kyat (MMK)
CURRENCY



PHOTO CREDIT: ICS Travel Group

0.9	Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)
34.1	Urban population (% , 2015)
21.9	Total labor force (million , 2010)
0.8	Unemployment rate (% , 2014)
7.3	Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)
1,203.5	GDP per capita (current USD , 2015)
0.2	Foreign direct investments in agriculture (USD million , 2010)

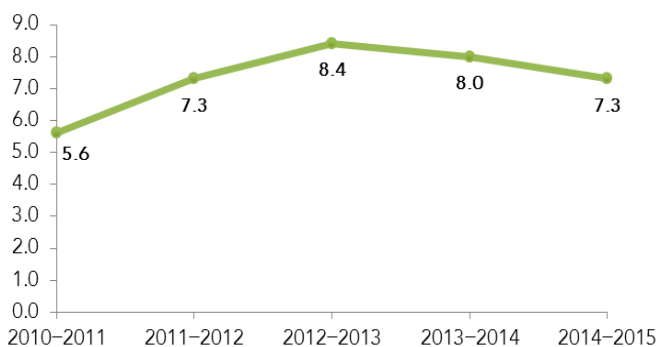
Myanmar, previously known as Burma, has seen remarkable changes in the last few years. While the country remains to be one of the least developed countries in the region, the recent transfer of power from military to civilian rule as well as the subsequent lifting of economic sanctions paved the way for the country's gradual transition towards a more inclusive market-oriented economy.

After decades of isolation, Myanmar now experiences an influx of investment and opportunities, which is crucial in reducing poverty and fueling rural growth in the country. Recent estimates show that about a quarter of the country's 53 million-population continues to live below the poverty line (ADB, 2016). Poverty is also increasingly more concentrated in rural communities where majority are predominantly involved in farm-related activities.

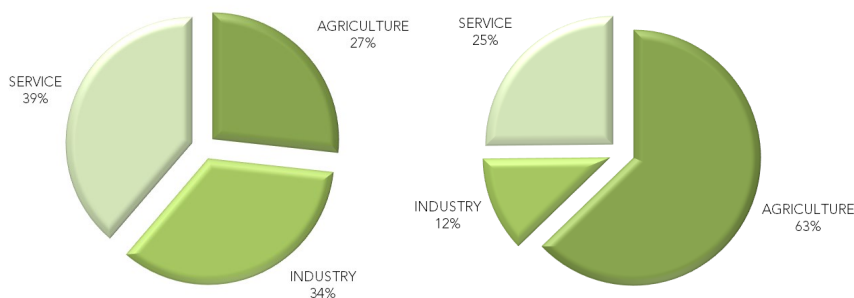
MAJOR INDUSTRIES



Despite the rapid growth of the industry and service sectors, agriculture remains to be the main source of income and livelihood in Myanmar. According to the World Bank (2016), about 63 percent of the country's labor force are into agriculture. Latest national statistics also shows that the sector contributes about 27 percent of the country's gross domestic product.



Annual GDP growth (%). Myanmar's overall GDP growth rate steadily increased following the country's historic election in 2010, the first election held in almost 20 years (ADB, 2016).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: In 2014, Myanmar's service sector occupied the largest share in the country's GDP output (ADB, 2016). Right: The latest available data show that six out of ten employed Myanmar nationals work in the agriculture sector (World Bank, 2016).

As the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia in terms of land area, there is still a huge potential for sustained rural development in Myanmar. The country is teeming with untapped natural resources and large expanses of arable land in many parts of the country are yet to be fully utilized.

Myanmar is also strategically located in the middle of several bustling economies including China, India, and Thailand. As a hotspot for regional trade, building the country's human resource capacity and infrastructure assets, such as roads, airports, and seaports, are imperative.

Strengthened investments to improve access to basic social services have slowly poured in to the country due to recent improvements in the country's political and economic climate. As Myanmar continues to open up, establishing enabling policies and mechanisms to ensure steady economic growth is crucial.

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS



1,370.0
BEANS/PULSES



484.1
RICE



70.0
MAIZE

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



605.4
PALM OIL



185.0
WHEAT

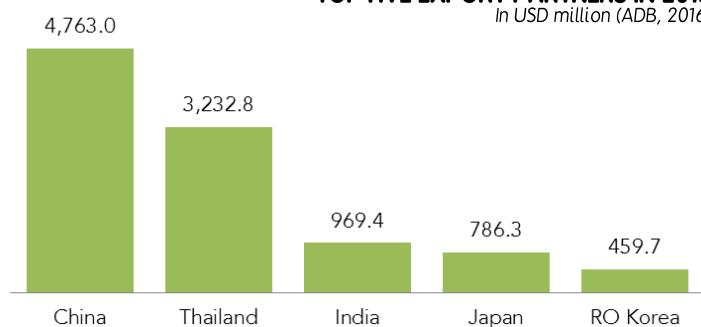


70.0
BARLEY

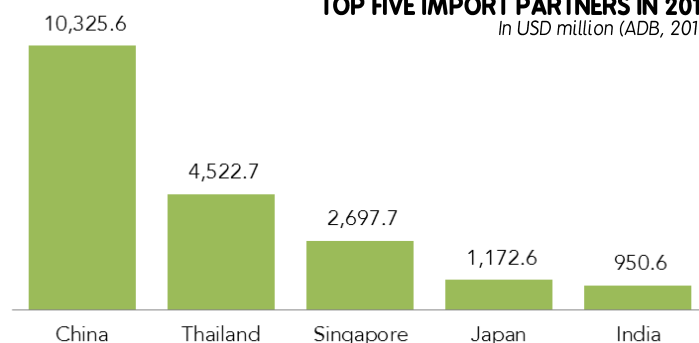
TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016)

DIRECTION OF TRADE

TOP FIVE EXPORT PARTNERS IN 2015
In USD million (ADB, 2016)



TOP FIVE IMPORT PARTNERS IN 2015
In USD million (ADB, 2016)



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

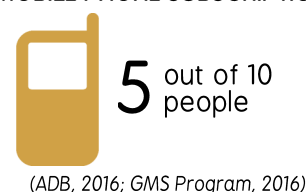
ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



ACCESS TO INTERNET



MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



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510,890 sq km
LAND AREA

67.2 million
POPULATION (2015)

Bangkok
CAPITAL CITY

Thai baht (THB)
CURRENCY



PHOTO CREDIT: Tourism Authority of Thailand

0.3	Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)
50.4	Urban population (% , 2015)
38.5	Total labor force (million , 2015)
0.9	Unemployment rate (% , 2015)
2.8	Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)
5,816.4	GDP per capita (current USD , 2015)
21.2	Foreign direct investments in agriculture (USD million , 2010)

Mostly shaped by a strong tourism sector and protracted export-driven industrialization, Thailand’s sustained growth in the last decades has made it among the largest and most important economies in the region. Alongside the substantial reduction of poverty over the years, the country’s progress has become a model for sustainable social and economic development for many Third World nations.

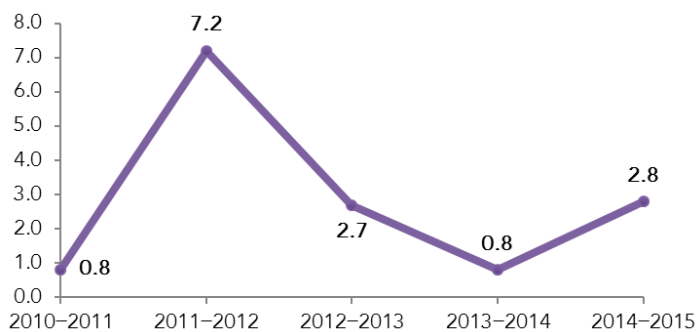
In the last five years, Thailand’s service sector has pinched in a major share of the country’s national income. In 2015, more than half of the national gross domestic earnings (55 percent) came from this sector. Conversely, the industry sector chipped in at least 35 percent, while the agriculture sector contributed only about 9 percent (ADB, 2016).

MAJOR INDUSTRIES

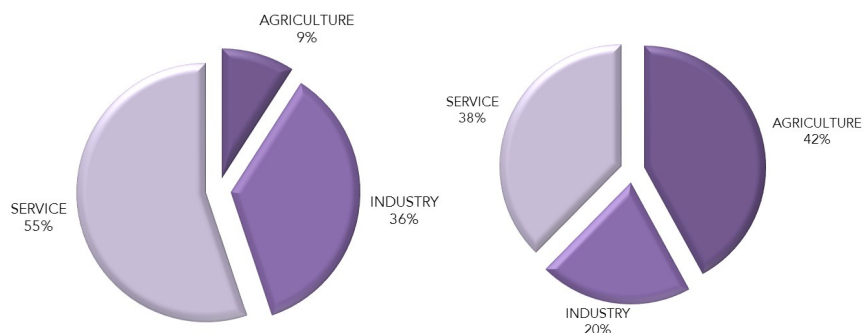
VEHICLES AND CAR PARTS CEMENT TOURISM ELECTRONICS TEXTILES AND GARMENTS

While it appears that the farming sector’s contribution was relatively lower than other sources of income, Thailand remains to be among the most productive agricultural countries in the world. In fact, Thailand is among the world’s largest producers of rice, rubber, and aquaculture products, among others (FAO, 2016).

Before the country’s rapid rise to becoming an upper middle-income nation, agriculture has long since been the backbone of Thailand’s economy. The World Bank (2016b) estimates that 42 percent of the country’s labor force belong to the agri sector.



Annual GDP growth (%). In the last five years, Thailand’s GDP growth saw dramatic fluctuations. In 2012, national GDP estimates grew by 7.2 percent, which was followed by a sudden decline in subsequent years (ADB, 2016).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: A major share of the country’s GDP comes from the service sector (ADB, 2016). Right: On the other hand, about 4 in 10 Thais rely on farm-related activities as their main source of livelihood (World Bank, 2016).

Strong government support, especially in improving crop and livestock processing facilities and providing agricultural extension services, has enhanced rural income and livelihoods. Sufficiency economy—a concept personally championed by the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej—is also widely embraced in many communities.

Thailand also has the most developed transportation system in the Greater Mekong Subregion. About 99 percent of the country's 390,026-km road network is paved (World Bank, 2016a). By linking rural roads with major interprovincial highways, it is easier for farmers to transport their goods to markets. There are also recent efforts to improve road linkages with the neighboring countries to better facilitate cross-border trade. Aside from these, the country also has robust railway, airport, seaport, and river transport systems, which makes Thailand a major trading hub in the region.

Recent changes in the Thai monarchy, fluctuating market prices, unstable political situation, and weakening local currency pose fairly significant risks on the country's economy. Despite these, latest economic prospects seem positive in many parts due to growing domestic consumption and increased public sector investments.

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

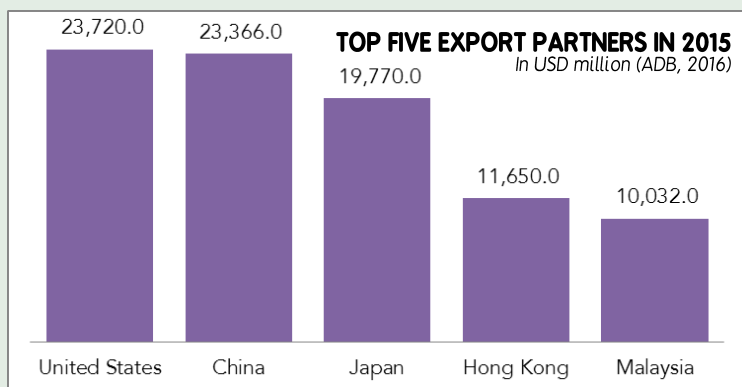


MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016)

DIRECTION OF TRADE



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



ACCESS TO INTERNET



MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



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310,070 sq km
LAND AREA

91.7 million
POPULATION (2015)

Hanoi
CAPITAL CITY

Vietnamese dong (VND)
CURRENCY



PHOTO CREDIT: R. Ricks

1.1	Annual population growth (% , 2014–2015)
33.6	Urban population (% , 2015)
54.0	Total labor force (million, 2010)
2.1	Unemployment rate (% , 2014)
6.7	Annual GDP growth (% , 2014–2015)
2,111.1	GDP per capita (current USD, 2015)
99.4	Foreign direct investments in agriculture (USD million, 2011)

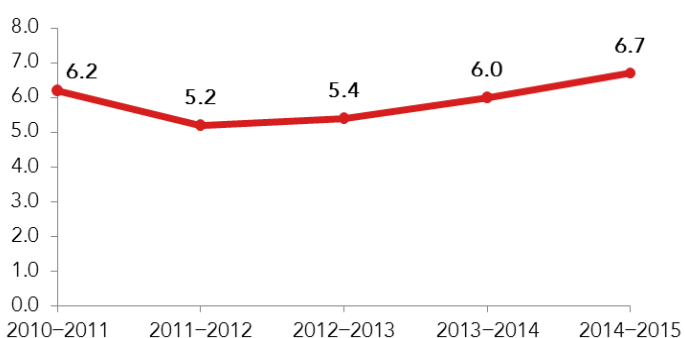
Viet Nam’s booming economy is a result of strong government-led efforts to build up the service and industrial sectors. In the last decade, the country has successfully shifted away from an agriculture-based society to a highly diversified open market economy.

Covering 310,070 km² on the eastern edges of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), Viet Nam boasts a rich natural resource base. Aside from this, about 35 percent of its total land area is dedicated for agriculture. The country also has the longest coastline (3,269 km) in the region with more than half the population living within 100 km from the coasts (PEMSEA, 2015; World Bank, 2016). Viet Nam is also home to more than 91.7 million people (ADB, 2016). With an increasing population and rapid urbanization, the country’s expansive human capital is increasingly becoming an asset.

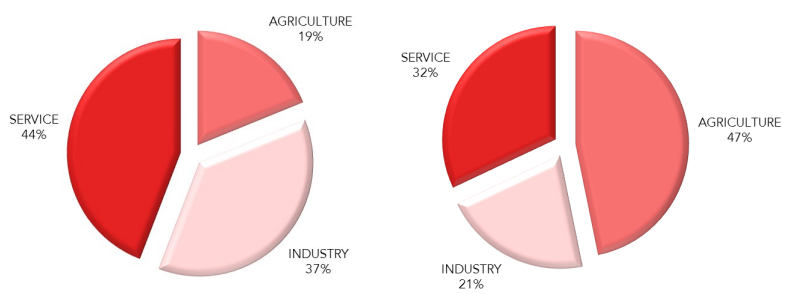
MAJOR INDUSTRIES

GARMENTS AND TEXTILES ELECTRONICS COFFEE CRUDE OIL FISHERY

Viet Nam’s economy is also characterized by a vibrant agricultural sector. In 2015, agriculture accounted for 18.9 percent of national gross domestic product. Latest ADB estimates (2016) also show that the sector grew at an annual rate of 2.4 percent between 2014 and 2015.



Annual GDP growth (%). Vietnam’s GDP rise shows no signs of stopping and its economy is expected to become the 35th largest in the world by 2020 (ADB, 2016).



GDP and labor force composition by sector (%). Left: Like most of its regional peers, Vietnam’s GDP output is mainly from its booming service sector (ADB, 2016). Right: About five out of ten working Vietnamese is into agriculture (World Bank, 2016).

The marine sector's potential also remains to be high with about 1 out of 10 Vietnamese heavily relying on fisheries as their main income source. Furthermore, the country's seas and coasts has continuously been a key source of employment opportunities in aquaculture and related small-scale industries, natural gas production, tourism, etc.

Continued foreign direct investments (FDIs) in the last decade also hastened the uninterrupted growth of Viet Nam's emerging economy. In 2011, the country's agriculture sector received about USD 99.4 million of FDI assets, the largest among neighboring Southeast Asian nations. This is expected to continually grow as the country adopts and implements the Viet Nam's Socioeconomic Development Strategy (2011–2020), which primarily outlines national strategies to upskill the country's labor force, make markets work, and improve local infrastructure capacity (FAO, 2016; World Bank, 2016).

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS



3,939.1
RICE



1,689.6
CASSAVA



1,306.5
COFFEE

MAJOR AGRICULTURAL IMPORTS



2,761.1
SOYBEAN



2,626.5
MAIZE



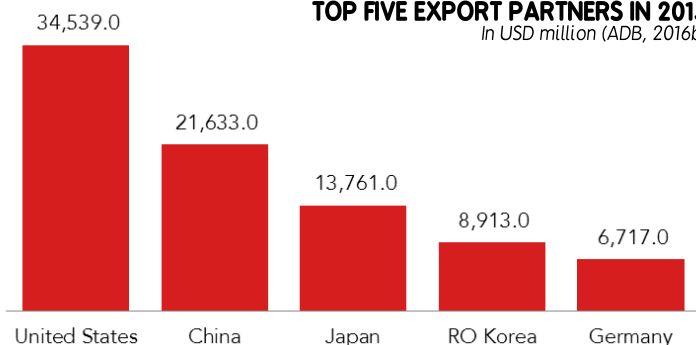
1,915.4
RUBBER

TOTAL VOLUME IN 2013
In thousand MT (FAO, 2016b)

DIRECTION OF TRADE

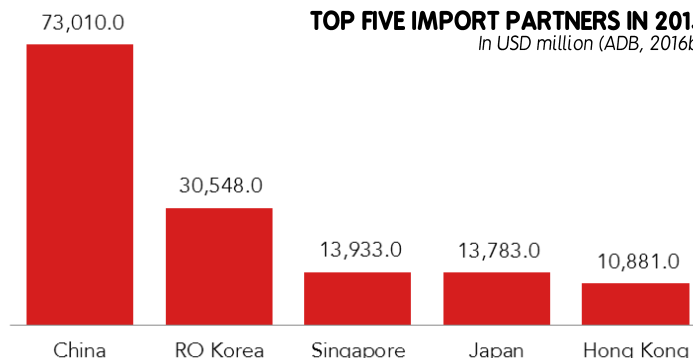
TOP FIVE EXPORT PARTNERS IN 2015

In USD million (ADB, 2016b)



TOP FIVE IMPORT PARTNERS IN 2015

In USD million (ADB, 2016b)



COST OF DOING BUSINESS



21 days
TIME TO EXPORT

\$610
COST TO EXPORT
(per container)

(GMS Program, 2016)



21 days
TIME TO IMPORT

\$600
COST TO IMPORT
(per container)

(GMS Program, 2016)

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY



10 out of 10 people

ACCESS TO INTERNET



5 out of 10 people

MOBILE PHONE SUBSCRIPTION



10 out of 10 people*

*150.1 subscriptions/100 people

(ADB, 2016b; GMS Program, 2016)

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