



SKILLS FOR TOURISM PROJECT • LAO/029

# TOURISM INSIGHTS

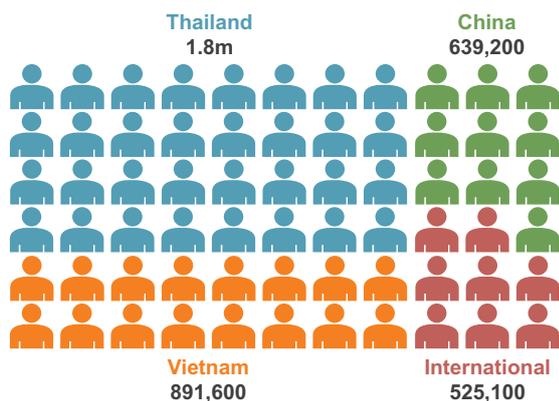
## A SNAPSHOT OF EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY SECTOR IN LAO PDR

Information for Job Seekers

Tourism is ripe with opportunity, offering you huge potential to build an exciting and rewarding career. As well as arming you with lots of information about employment opportunities, this bulletin provides details of education and training programmes for a career in the sector.

### A career with a future

In 2017, almost 3.9 million international tourists visited Lao PDR. About 3.3 million (86%) were regional tourists from neighbouring countries such as Thailand, China, Myanmar, Vietnam and Cambodia, and 525,000 (14%) were from other countries. These tourists spent almost USD\$650m supporting up to 55,000 direct jobs in the sector.



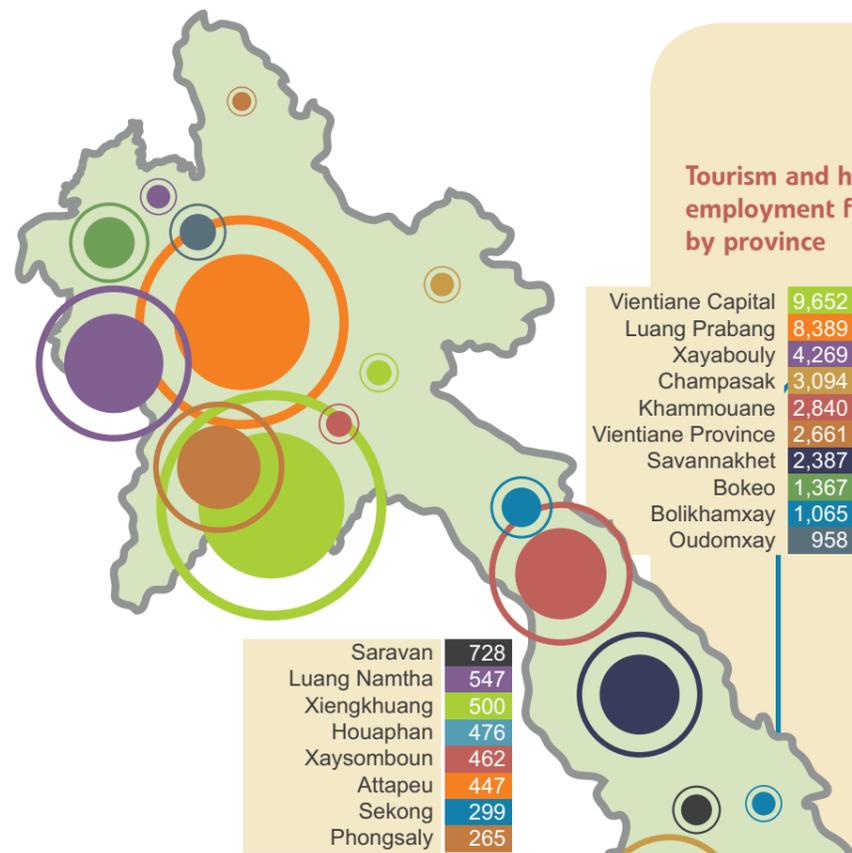
### Is a career in the tourism and hospitality sector for you?

Tourism is foreign or domestic travellers visiting the cities and countryside of Lao PDR for pleasure or business. Hospitality is about welcoming guests and providing great customer service.

The tourism industry is not for everyone, but if you love working with people, you thrive on challenges, and you're looking for a career where no two days are the same, then the tourism and hospitality industry is definitely worth considering as you prepare for the next stage of your life. From rising up the career ladder in busy hotels and restaurants to staging exciting events or running a travel agency, there are roles to suit everyone.

At present international visitors stay longer and spend more per day than regional visitors. The 525,000 international visitors make up 34% of all visitor days and spend more money during their visits than all of the 3.3 million visitors from neighbouring countries.

By 2020 international tourist arrivals are expected to grow to over 5.5m and generate over USD\$932m in revenue. By 2025 international tourist arrivals are projected to reach almost 7m and generate USD\$1.2b in revenue. If realised, this growth will create substantial demand for additional well trained staff. While information in relation to domestic tourism is in short supply, it is estimated that there were over 2.2m domestic tourists in 2017.



Tourism and hospitality employment figures in 2018 by province

## Climbing the career ladder

There are a wide range of jobs available in hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, visitor attractions, tour operators and transport services. There is a job opportunity to suit everyone.

Entry level positions are in high demand - cooks and chefs, waiters and bar tenders, receptionists and housekeepers, cleaners and luggage porters, tour guides and ticket agents, to name but a few. Every business also requires managerial staff to oversee operations.

For those who start at entry level in the sector, promotion is often faster and easier than in other sectors if you are enthusiastic, motivated and committed. The potential to kick start your career and begin to climb the career ladder is within reach.



Tourism and hospitality jobs in Lao PDR in 2018

## Earn while you learn

What you earn depends on your qualifications, skills and experience. As you gain more skills and move up the career ladder, your pay will rise.

Most entry level jobs come with a salary between 1,000,000 Kip and 2,000,000 Kip per month. Additional benefits are a common feature of working in tourism and hospitality including, for example, staff accommodation, meals on duty, uniforms and service charge.

In jobs where you deal directly with foreign visitors, language skills are also important. Consider the various nationalities that visit Lao PDR. The ability to communicate in, for example, English, French, Chinese or Korean can greatly improve the visitor experience.

For a fun way to improve your English language skills, download the free English language App for Tourism and Hospitality, "Sabaidee English"

iOS: Visit App Store and type: "Sabaidee English"

Android: Visit Play Store and type: "Sabaidee English"

## Six skills for success

In addition to the technical know-how required for different jobs, you need certain qualities and skills that employers value and customers expect.

### 1. Commitment

In the tourism and hospitality industry, your main task is to ensure customer satisfaction. This requires a willingness to do whatever it takes to keep customers happy and create repeat business.

### 2. Interpersonal skills

The very nature of the business is providing excellent customer service. This involves being able to communicate effectively so that you make positive connections with guests and other employees. Personality is a must. The industry needs people who are enthusiastic, friendly and professional.

### 3. Problem solving

Problem solving involves finding practical solutions to routine customer queries or operational problems that occur. The ability to stay calm and empathise with guests, even in busy and stressful situations, is an essential skill.

### 4. Teamwork

Working well with others and being a productive team member is critical for success. Key requirements include understanding your own role in serving the needs of customers, taking instructions from supervisors, supporting other team members to coordinate activities for quality service delivery, respecting cultural diversity, and seeking assistance when necessary.

### 5. Multitasking

Most positions in the industry require handling many things at once in a fast-paced environment. To stay on top of job you must be organised and able to multitask without difficulty. Employers want staff who can handle the fast paced, varied workload whilst still maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction.

### 6. Flexibility

Tourism and hospitality employees often need to work unusual hours. They must be ready to switch gears at a moment's notice if unexpected situations arise. Being adaptable and versatile makes you indispensable to employers.

# Your learning options

Having a relevant qualification gives you a great start on the road to success. It can also help you to move up the career ladder.

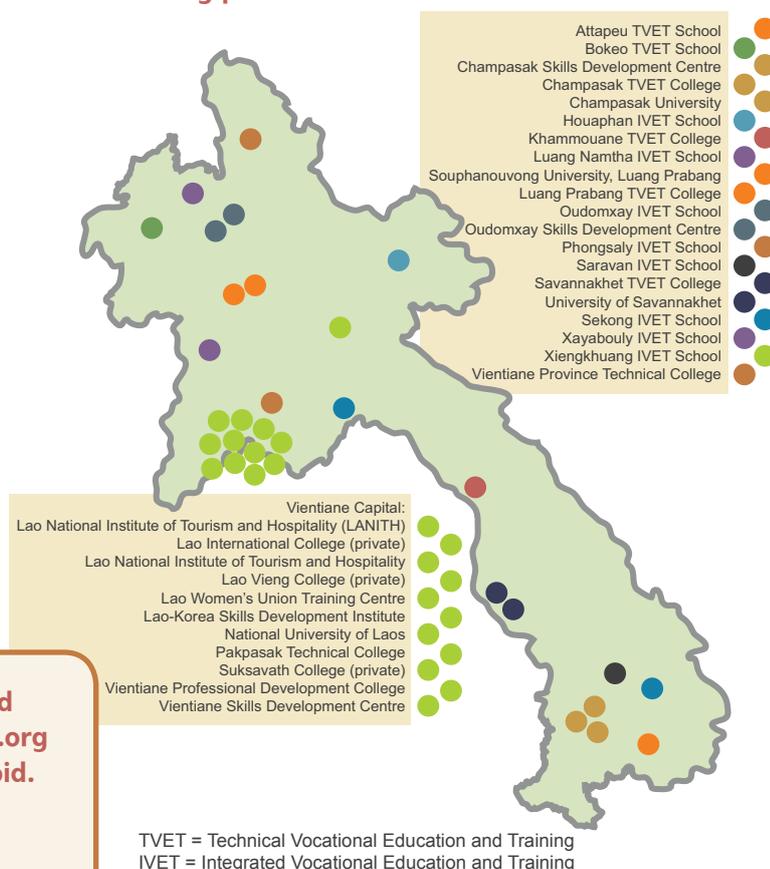
In 2017, over 2,000 young women and men graduated from tourism and hospitality programmes in Lao PDR. The widest range of programmes are offered in public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) schools and colleges around the country. Some private TVET colleges also offer tourism and hospitality courses. Other training providers include skills development centres (SDCs), the Lao Women's Union and various non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Higher level qualifications are offered by the universities.

**For more information about TVET tourism and hospitality programmes, visit [www.tvet-laos.org](http://www.tvet-laos.org) and download the TVET App for iOS or Android.**

**iOS: Visit App Store and type: "TVET"**

**Android: Visit Play Store and type: "TVET LAO"**

## Public sector tourism and hospitality education and training providers in Lao PDR



This labour market information bulletin is informed by the findings of a 2018 *Tourism and Hospitality Enterprise Survey of Employment and Skills in Lao PDR* which was supported by the Skills for Tourism Project (LAO/029).

Skills for Tourism supports improvements in tourism and hospitality technical and vocational education and training and skills development in Lao PDR. A particular emphasis of the project is to support people from disadvantaged backgrounds to acquire the skills needed to work in hotels, restaurants and the greater tourism economy.

Skills for Tourism is co-financed by the Governments of Lao PDR, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Switzerland, and is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR and the Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency (LuxDev).

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