

# Assessment and Selection Criteria for MICE Destinations and Convention Centers in Thailand

Siwaporn Klinmalai<sup>1\*</sup> and Peeradorn Kaewlai<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1, 2</sup> Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University, Pathum Thani, Thailand

\*Corresponding author e-mail: [kswaporn@yahoo.com](mailto:kswaporn@yahoo.com)

Received 5/9/2022    Revised 27/9/2022    Accepted 30/9/2022

## Abstract

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) industry is growing rapidly and has generated a substantial income and economic impact on a national level. Many cities therefore aim to become an international convention destination or MICE destination. The objective of this research is to study the factors in the assessment and selection criteria of MICE destinations in Thailand. The methodology involves document analysis as qualitative research. The study found that many different sets of selection and assessment criteria for MICE destinations and convention centers have been established by a number of national and international organizations. It is the intention of this paper to propose a synthesized set of criteria that would be applicable to the Thai context and which could be applied from the scale of the city to the scale of the convention center. The study also revealed that certain key factors can be found within all assessment criteria reviewed for MICE destinations: accessibility, MICE venue, context, and accommodation. Nevertheless, when considering the construction of a convention center, it must be accompanied by other physical developments of the city, such as MICE tourism-related infrastructure and facilities, as well as support from both the public and private sectors.

## Keywords

MICE Destination; Convention Centers; Assessment Criteria

## 1. Introduction

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) travel is a part of business tourism. MICE travelers are high-value tourists who spend up to 17.5% more than leisure tourists (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE), 2016), generating both direct and indirect income for their destinations. In Thailand, MICE travel generates an annual revenue of more than 200 billion baht (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], 2018). The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) was established to promote and strengthen the competitiveness of the country's meetings industry and to advocate for its inclusion in the national agenda (MICE Capabilities Development Department and Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], 2019) .

The reasons a city should support the MICE sector are: 1) the economic impact, including indirect benefits to local businesses; 2) the reduction of seasonal limitations and an alternative to saturation during the peak season as meetings and trade fairs usually are not held during holidays and therefore can boost tourism during the off-peak season, creating a continuous flow of visitors to the area and increasing visitor numbers without the need for extensive additional resources; 3) better quality tourism: MICE tourists spend on average twice as much as regular tourists, and up to as much as six times more, depending on the destination city; 4) many business travelers will often extend their stay to spend a few days exploring and getting to know the city; 5) cities receive promotion at the international level, increasing their visibility as a destination; 6) cities become more competitive destinations in times when there is a decline in tourism if a variety of groups are targeted and travel packages are more diversified (MICERS, 2017). As can be seen, the hosting of meetings can bring enormous benefits to the local community and the host country. Some benefits begin several years before the actual events. In order to become the host of international conventions, there usually is an invitation and bidding process where different countries must compete against each other. Many countries seek the benefits that international conventions can provide and therefore actively pursue developments that will increase the competitiveness of their cities as destinations for the meetings industry (Liu, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial to study the factors affecting the selection process of a destination city.

The venue is one of the key factors in the organization of conferences and exhibitions. It should be seen as an important product and service that must meet the needs of the following three target groups: MICE travelers/attendees, event managers and exhibitors or performers, and facilities operations managers (Clark, 2005). Each type of MICE tourism has different spatial requirements; in developing the MICE segment as a whole, it therefore is necessary to study and understand the physical aspects of the venue or convention center and their requirements. For this reason, MICE city assessment should have international standards to compare the destination's competitiveness between various countries. However, the standards would be applied in various dimensions and goals such as competitiveness, including global, regional, and national competitors; and stage of assessment, including city/destination and convention center. The criteria of these assessments are related and overlap. Thus, it is necessary to study mutual criteria of assessment and their application to determine which city and convention center may be most appropriate in hosting a particular event.

The objectives of this research are: 1) to study the factors in the assessment and selection criteria of MICE destinations; 2) to study the factors in the site selection criteria for the convention center and the key facilities of a convention center that will allow it to compete internationally; and 3) to study the process of applying the assessment and selection criteria of destination cities, including the selection of a site for a convention center.

## **2. Methodology and scope of work**

### **2.1 Scope of work**

From the literature review, it was found that the assessment criteria for MICE destinations and convention centers exist for a variety of scales of implementation and many standards have been established by various organizations such as the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and TCEB. However, for the criteria to be used effectively they should reflect the context of the selected target destinations. Although there are many factors in destination development, the one that carries the most weight in the assessment of

a competitive international convention destination is the convention center Milovanovic (2020). This study therefore focuses on the evaluation of an appropriate set of assessment tools at different scales, from the city level to the convention center level to identify the most comprehensive assessment criteria for a MICE destination.

### 2.2 Methodology

This study followed a qualitative research method using document analysis, which involves systematically reviewing and evaluating existing literature on the tools for assessing the potential of destination cities to be a MICE host based on both national and international scales,, the location of the convention center, and competitiveness against other possible destinations. The process of analysis involved finding, selecting, appraising, and summarizing the assessment criteria from the different international and national standards to propose a synthesized version that is suited to the context of Thailand.

The structure of the paper follows the review process as shown in Figure 1. For analysis tool, it applied extraction sheet to analyze the assessment criteria of MICE destination.

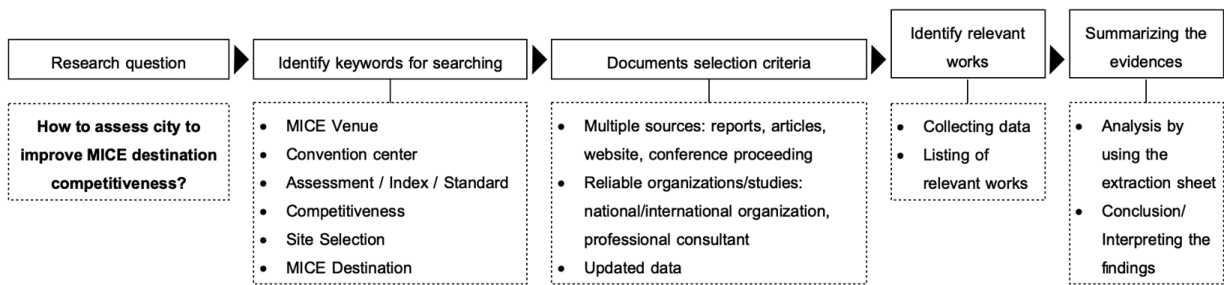


Figure 1 Research methodology.

The results of the review are a set of proposed analytical tools for the assessment of MICE destinations, convention center site selection, and comparison of key convention center facilities against competitor destinations. Finally, the study illustrates how the resulting criteria can be applied to assess the potential of MICE destinations from the city scale to convention center scale.

## 3. Literature review

### 3.1 MICE Tourism

Global Report of the Meetings Industry 2014 by United Nations' World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) evaluates the MICE tourism as a “clean” industry stating that it promotes environmental quality. As it is stated in the report “meetings promote and support other business sectors, meetings create and spread knowledge worldwide, meetings build the community profile, meetings promote global understanding and cooperation”. This movement promotes the creation of sustainable business models using local resources and contributing to social interaction, improved productivity, and greater innovation (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2014). UNWTO also focuses on sustainable development in relation to tourism, noting sustainability must reflect “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (United Nations Environment Programme & World Tourism Organization, 2005). Thus, MICE tourism development should suitably balance environmental, economic, and socio-cultural principles.

This positive impact of MICE tourism follows the MICE value chain concept (Figure 2) to illustrate that interorganizational relationships among industry stakeholders are successfully transferred to MICE tourism (Bueno et al., 2020). Figure 2 clearly shows that MICE tourism could create direct and indirect benefits for the city destination.

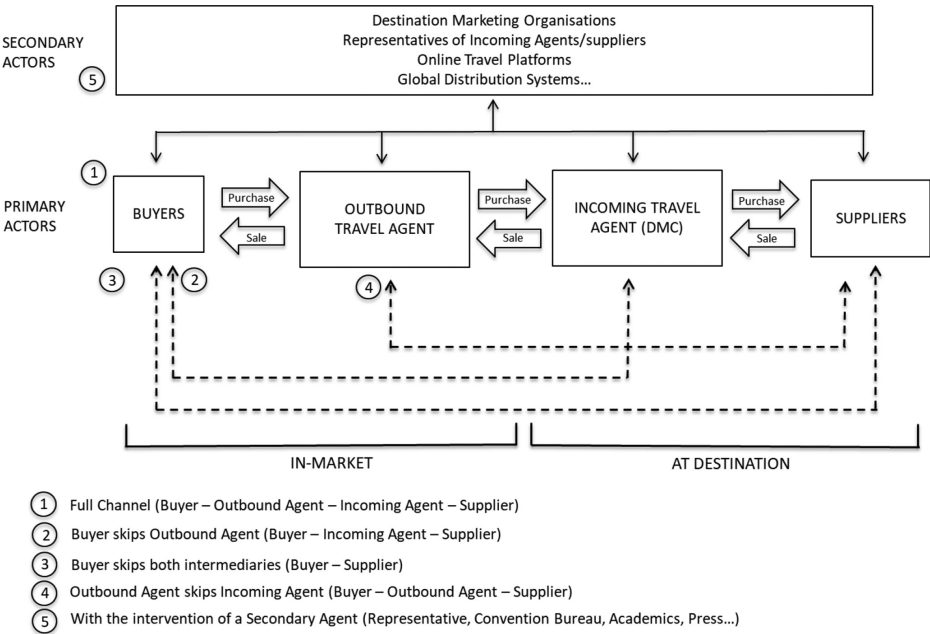


Figure 2 MICE tourism value chain (Bueno et al., 2020).

### 3.2 Standards for MICE venues/conference centers

MICE venues are undoubtedly one of the vital factors for a destination to be selected for MICE activity. For ASEAN countries, there is an international set of standards for MICE venues, the ASEAN MICE Venue Standards (AMVS), while Thailand also has devised its own Thailand MICE Venue Standards (TMVS), which have been certified by the AMVS. AMVS and TMVS provide guidance to develop and enhance the capacity and competitiveness of MICE entrepreneurs and owners of venues in serving both the organizers and visitors in a professional way. AMVS and TMVS cover 3 categories, namely, meeting rooms, exhibition venue, and event venue. An example of guidance criteria for meeting rooms is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Overall Criteria of AMVS and TMVS (category Meeting Room)

AMVS MICE Capabilities Development Department & Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB, 2018)	TMVS MICE Capabilities Development Department & Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), 2019)
<b>Physical Setting</b> Physical setting of a meeting room refers to, for example, the condition of the meeting room (walls, partitions, facilities, and cleanliness), the pre-functional area and the meeting room's compound. This includes reception, registration, waiting areas, breakout rooms, media center and dining area. Public areas, safety/security/emergency facilities and organizer's access to meeting room also are included.	<b>Physical Component</b> Physical elements of meeting room and surrounding area of the meeting, materials, the meeting equipment, water supplies, electrical system, air-conditioner, and safety
<b>Technology</b> Technology refers to, for example, light, A/V, power, and air conditioning employed for a meeting purpose. This also refers to the availability of internet-WiFi as well as document and interpretation services dedicated for a meeting purpose.	<b>Technology Component</b> Sound management system, visual system, communication system, and internet

**Table 1** Overall Criteria of AMVS and TMVS (category Meeting Room) (continue)

Service Service refers to, for example, services provided for the meeting purpose. This includes the coordination of the staff of the venues with the organizers as well as the venue's service improvement process. Quality of staff as well as environmental protection/community also are included.	Service Component Service management, Human resource preparation and management
	Sustainability Component Environmental management, occupational safety and health, general safety, and social responsibility

### 3.3 Assessment factors in the international association meetings: bidding and decision-making

According to the 2019 white paper 'International association meetings: bidding and decision-making' by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), the assessment criteria for destination cities are as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Selection Criteria for Destination Cities

	Criteria	Issues
1	Logistical criteria	Date/timing related factors
		International accessibility
		Local accessibility
		Main venue
		Delegate accommodation
		Local suppliers
2	Financial criteria	Financial responsibility and objectives
		Price in bids or additional charge in the venue
		PCO/DMC (breakdown of charges for PCO/DMC)
		Delegate accommodation (hotel price)
		Transport (price reduction for transportation)
		Subventions & Support (In-kind or cash subvention from host country)
		Other financial issues
3	Internal association objectives (long-term strategic objectives and short-term tactical objectives)	
4	Political / emotional criteria	Attractiveness of destination
		Bidder related factors
		Decision-makers
		Bid presentations

Source: International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA, 2019)

### 3.4 Factors in the destination selection criteria for event organizers

#### 3.4.1 Destination selection

From the perspective of event organizers, the selection of MICE destinations requires more coordination and planning than other forms of tourism, with four areas of consideration: 1) the venue or convention center

is the most important aspect of MICE planning. Related factors for consideration include determining the required number and capacity of venues, determining the capacity of existing facilities, venue design, etc.; 2) the means of land and air transportation to bring participants from various areas and countries to the event; 3) accommodations is another important factor because MICE travelers prefer accommodations located near the event venue and they must be fully equipped to support business needs such as internet connection, etc.; 4) there must be a variety of supporting services, such as catering services, shopping venues, entertainment venues, etc., including facilities at the event venue itself, such as parking, microphone and sound system, etc. (Indira Gandhi National Open University [IGNOU], 2017).

#### 3.4.2 Venue selection

Variables that organizers focus on include the choice of restaurants, safety and security, and the destination image (Para & Kachniewska, 2014). Additional factors are convention center or event venue and accommodation (choice of convention center or venue and their facilities, etc.); costs (costs of travel, accommodations, food expenses, various goods, etc.); site environment (city's reputation, accessibility, suitability and quality of the area's infrastructure); community or city support (government support and the quality and efficiency of industry personnel); and leisure and tourism opportunities (climate, outdoor entertainment and availability of tourism and cultural attractions) (Chen, 2006).

### 3.5 Assessment criteria for the location of a convention center

To analyze the potential of the convention venue location, it is essential to review criteria from various sources. The location of a convention center is determined by the following factors (Clark, 2005):

(1) Close to hotels and restaurants: organizers prefer convention centers that are located no more than a few blocks away from hotels and restaurants. The existing amenities in proximity to accommodations play a crucial role when determining the location of the convention center. Therefore, the convention center should be located in an area with a concentration of existing hotel accommodations.

(2) Downtown: as the city center in many cities is in a state of dilapidation, one of the ways to revitalize a city is to bring more people back to the downtown area by building a convention center there.

(3) In urban areas that have been earmarked for regeneration (e.g. New York City, Washington, D.C.) where new convention centers were setup in neglected areas. When a convention center is built, it often becomes a major attraction for hotels, restaurants, car rental companies, etc.

(4) In historic buildings: in Athens, Georgia, for example, a new convention center was built around an historic fire station. The original building was converted into a unique convention space.

(5) Free land: in many cases, cities have built convention centers on sites that have been provided gratis by hotel or project developers who want to ensure that the convention center will be built near their own properties.

According to the International Convention Destination Competitive Index (Milovanovic, 2020), the key considerations for location include 11 assessment factors, with different weights applied to each factor:

- (1) Convention facilities capacity (top 3 most utilized by international convention) (weight 0.2)
- (2) Hotel offer (capacity and proximity to the primary facility) (weight 0.15)
- (3) Air access (levels of international direct service and convenience of connections) (weight 0.1)
- (4) Destination appeal (for business and tourism) (weight 0.1)
- (5) Association market audience (strength of association community) (weight 0.1)

- (6) Cost (staging and delegate costs) (weight 0.1)
- (7) Logistics (ease of movement) (weight 0.05)
- (8) Market size (population) (weight 0.05)
- (9) Size of economy (GDP and GDP per capita) (weight 0.05)
- (10) Business environment (competitiveness, innovation, ease of doing business) (weight 0.05)
- (11) Safety & stability (crime rates and corruption levels) (weight 0.05)

### 3.6 Selection criteria for destination competitors

According to data (GainingEdge, 2018), MICE destination competitors can be divided into three groups as follows:

1) National competitors: destinations within a country that have the potential to be both direct and indirect competitors in the MICE industry.

2) Tier 2 direct regional competitors: regional destinations that have the potential to be both direct and indirect competitors in the MICE industry.

3) Tier 1 indirect comparator cities: regional destinations that are indirect competitors in the MICE industry, but can be valuable as a model for certain aspects in destination development.

Tier 2 destinations (direct regional competitors) often are the most successful cities in the region with similar contextual, topographical and climatic conditions, or similarities in the economy or key industries. Tier 1 destinations (indirect regional competitors) are the leading cities in the MICE industry within the region, and/or are capital cities or regional financial hubs, as well as those with similar contextual, topographical and climatic conditions.

### 3.7 Competitive Analysis

Becoming the host of international MICE events involves a bidding process, which means that cities need to be able to showcase their strengths and appeal as a MICE destination in order to stand out from the competition. Most destinations will identify their main competitors in order to benchmark their own performance against them. Therefore, competitor analysis tools are important in the process of analyzing competitors, which is done by comparing factors relevant to destination development. For the purposes of this study, we focus on those factors related to the convention center.

One marketing tool that can inform about competitive advantage is the positioning map, also known as perceptual mapping. It is a graphical representation where brands can portray their distinctive features to visualize the relative positioning between competing brands based on specific characteristics. The tool is able to show the similarities and differences between brands by measuring the parameters that are important to their industry and can lead to the implementation of a successful positioning strategy (Gigauri, 2019). To create a positioning map, the first step is to decide on the two parameters that are most important to the industry or market, but which also depends on the available data and the purpose of the comparison. The second step is to list all the major competitors who provide a similar product, especially those that are direct competitors. The third step is to rate the competitors according to the set of parameters selected for analysis, for example, the size of the meeting space in square meters. Finally, the position of your own brand is mapped on the graph using current data, which makes it possible to visualize your own position in the market. The size of the circles in the graph also can be used to indicate market share, as can be seen in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** Example of a perceptual mapping template (Van, 2010).

### 3.8 Review summary and discussion

After reviewing the MICE destination assessment, the criteria were summarized in terms of level, scope, and number of criteria, based on the data extraction process (Table 3). Table 3 shows that 38.75% of MICE assessments are applied at the international level. Moreover, the main focus of the MICE assessments is related to the MICE venue, with 3-4 criteria.

The study grouped the factors from Table 3 into 8 categories of criteria as shown in Table 4. The most frequently cited criteria are related to the convention center site context which addresses convenience for MICE travelers and delegates.

**Table 3.** Comparison of MICE Destination Assessment

No.	Research/paper	Author	Year	Type of source	Assessment		
					Level	Scope	Number of Criteria
	MICE assessment paper						
1	Thailand MICE Venue Standards (TMVS)	TCEB	2019	Report	Thailand	Venue	4 criteria
2	ASEAN MICE Venue Standards (AMVS)	AMVS	2019	Report	ASEAN	Venue	3 criteria
3	Bidding and decision-making	ICCA	2019	Report	International	City	4 criteria
4	Determinants of Convention & Conference Site Selection: The Polish Event Planners' Perspective	IGNOU	2017	Report	International	City	4 criteria
5	Planning MICE	Para and Kachniewska	2014	Conference proceedings	International	Venue	3 criteria
6	Applying the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) Approach to Convention Site Selection	Chen	2006	Article in Journal	International	Venue	4 criteria



**Table 3.** Comparison of MICE Destination Assessment (continue)

No.	Research/paper	Author	Year	Type of source	Assessment		
					Level	Scope	Number of Criteria
7	Considering a Convention Center	Clark	2005	Article in Journal	International	City	5 criteria
8	International Convention Destination Competitive Index	Gaining Edge	2018	Report	International	Venue & City	11 criteria
Competitiveness paper							
9	International Convention Destination Competitive Index	Gaining Edge	2018	Report	International	City	3 tiers of competitors
10	Applying Perceptual Mapping Method for Successful Positioning Strategy	Gigauri	2019	Article in Journal	International	-	-
11	Perceptual Mapping / PERMAP	Van, Vliet	2010	Website	International	-	-

**Table 4** Category Analysis of Criteria of MICE Destination Assessment

Category of Criteria/Factors of Assessment	List of literature (following Table 3) (No.)								Sum
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
MICE Venue:									5
• Physical of venue	/	/							
• Venue				/					
• Venue facility						/		/	
Accessibility and Logistics									5
• Logistics			/					/	
• Transportation				/					
• Downtown area (people commute to downtown)							/		
• Access								/	
Context surrounding the venue (Convenience and attraction)									7
• Choice of restaurant					/				
• Destination image and appeal					/			/	
• Site environment						/			
• Urban area (convention center becomes attraction)							/		
• Historic building (makes a unique convention space)							/		
• Market size (city population)								/	
Accommodations									3
• Accommodations surrounding the venue				/					
• Close to hotel							/		

**Table 4** Category Analysis of Criteria of MICE Destination Assessment (continue)

Category of Criteria/Factors of Assessment	List of literature (following Table 3) (No.)								Sum
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
• Hotel								/	
Financial features of city and cost/expense for delegates									5
• Financial responsibility			/						
• Cost and expense for delegates						/			
• Size of economy								/	
• Business environment								/	
Service and management in the venue									4
• Service management and human resources	/	/							
• Variety of supporting services				/					
• Internal association			/						
City support and political stability									5
• Political			/						
• Safety and security					/			/	
• City support						/			
• Community								/	
Other									4
• Technology	/	/							
• Sustainable management		/							
• Free land							/		

## 4. Findings for assessment and selection criteria for MICE destination

### 4.1 Assessment criteria for convention destination

From studying the destination selection criteria by the ICCA together with findings from research on public and private organizers of corporate meetings (Soonsan, 2018), the criteria for destination selection can be summarized as follows:

#### 4.1.1 The physical criteria consists of:

##### 1) Accessibility and Transportation

- Air access (frequency and types of flights)
- Public transport and logistics (types of transportation and journey durations)
- Suitability and quality of infrastructure

##### 2) Venue

- Range of convention facilities
- Supporting amenities and services
- Distance between convention center, hotels, and other event venues

### 3) Accommodation

- The number of 4-5 stars hotels in the vicinity with vacancies of between 30-50 rooms per hotel during the event
- Proximity of hotels to the convention center
- Brand quality of 4-5 star hotels in the area

### 4) Appeal of Destination and services

- Participants' perception of the appeal of the destination
- Leisure and sightseeing options within close proximity to the convention center and hotels/accommodations
- Safety

#### 4.1.2 Other supporting criteria are:

- Local and government support, such as public policy and local industry suppliers
- Local workforce, such as the quality of services from local professional organizers and quality and efficiency of industry personnel
- Cost such as cost of living and support funding

## 4.2 Assessment of MICE destinations in the context of Thailand

To carry out an assessment of MICE destinations in Thailand, it is necessary to consider the specific contextual factors of the country. The above criteria therefore should be considered in conjunction with TCEB's MICE city assessment criteria. Using TCEB's criteria requires the preparation of the following data:

4.2.1 Basic information on the city, such as area, economy, tourism, infrastructure, and the city strategic plan.

4.2.2 Information on the city's existing supply of meeting facilities, which requires data on (1) number and capacity of meeting facilities, and (2) hotel stock and their star ratings.

4.2.3 Statistics on the destination's previous MICE events to survey the current market demands and identify potential future markets, as well as for determining the requirements of event venues or convention centers.

After assembling the aforementioned pivotal data, it is imperative to assess it through the TCEB's MICE city assessment criteria, as delineated below (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], 2021a) :

- 1) Ease of access to the city via road, air or rail.
- 2) Local support for MICE events from government agencies, the private sector, the public, and the education sector.
- 3) Support for additional activities such as the variety of tourist attractions, entertainment venues, shopping centers, recreational facilities, as well as business opportunities.
- 4) Accommodations is one of the essential requirements that event organizers consider as MICE events require at least an overnight stay.
- 5) The number and capacity of meeting venues and their supporting facilities.
- 6) The city's image: international organizers often will consider whether the city's reputation is in line with the event or activity to be hosted.
- 7) The site environment assesses the suitability of the local climate and the environment around the convention site, whether the city's infrastructure is adequate for hosting, and the hospitality of the surrounding communities.

8) Risk and security assesses the risk of cancelation due to external circumstances such as natural disasters or political unrest.

### **4.3 Competitor Analysis**

To study the competition, it is necessary to select destinations that are direct competitors to the destination under analysis (refer to section 3.5). The competitor destinations and their convention centers are then analyzed using the following criteria:

1) City strategic plan: finding the MICE strategic position of competitor destinations, their industry targets and government support, for both direct and indirect regional competitor destinations. Studying their strategic plans will reveal opportunities or help to determine the direction for a MICE destination strategic plan.

2) The physical aspects of convention venues are studied by selecting those that are prominent at the city-level from direct competitor destinations in the region to determine the area requirements and types of convention facilities. The study should include the following factors:

- (1) Type of business model, such as the investment model
- (2) Context, such as the character of the surrounding neighborhood
- (3) Accessibility, such as travel time and distance from the airport or from the city center and the available types of public transportation
- (4) General area of the convention center, such as site area, building area, and number of parking spaces
- (5) The quantity, size, and type of the largest event areas of the convention center, such as exhibition halls, conference halls, meeting rooms, auditoria, and grand ballrooms
- (6) A checklist for supporting facilities including front of house

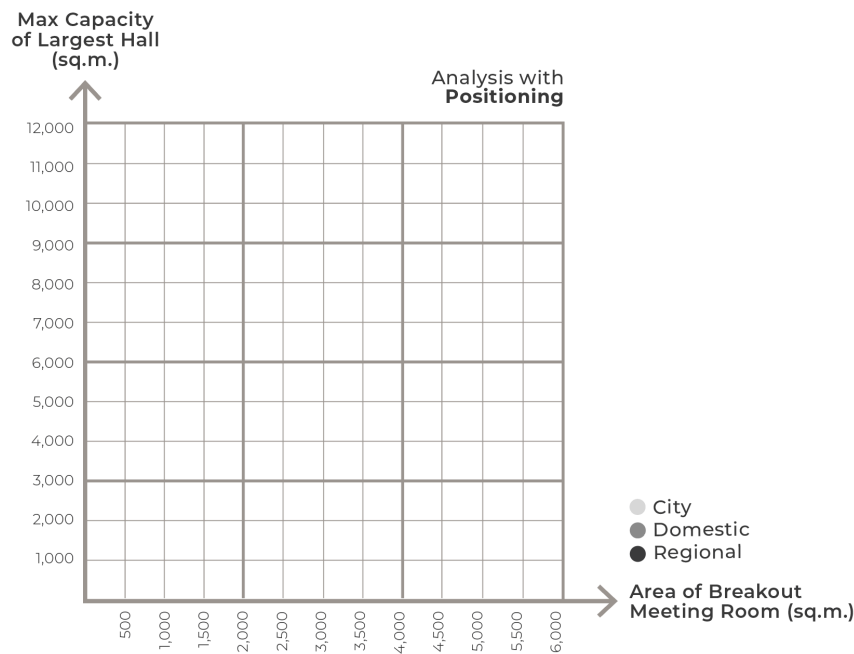
The results of this competitor analysis will give a clearer picture of the positioning of the direct competitor destinations and an understanding of the meetings market at the regional level, as well as a set of data for further analysis.

### **4.4 Competitor analysis of convention center capacity using positioning map**

Using a positioning map to analyze the size of competitor convention centers will help to determine the appropriate size of convention center for the market and allow a destination to compete in the region as well as determining future expansions.

The most important factor for convention centers is the areas that can be used for hosting the various MICE events including meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions. Therefore, it is necessary to know the capacity in square meters of the largest halls and breakout meeting rooms of the destination under study (referred to as “City” in Figure 4), domestic competitors (referred to as “Domestic” in Figure 4) and regional competitors (referred to as “Regional” in Figure 4) and plotting their positions onto a positioning graph as shown in Figure 4.

The result of this comparison will allow a destination to determine the maximum sizes of its convention area and major facilities that would be competitive in the market.



**Figure 4.** Template of positioning map for analyzing convention facility capacity.

#### 4.5 Assessment of potential location for convention center in MICE destinations in Thailand

Studying the international assessment criteria for the location of a convention center (section 3.4) reveals that it would be difficult to apply them wholesale in the context of Thailand due to the lack of data for some of the assessment factors, while some of the factors need to be considered both qualitatively and quantitatively.

This paper therefore suggests that the assessment process for a suitable location for a convention center in MICE destinations in Thailand should involve the following sequence of steps. First, collecting data on a destination city’s basic information (section 4.2.1) to study its existing characteristics and potential, then collect information from the perspectives of involved parties, both domestically and regionally, in order to analyze, sort, and select suitable target locations. These target locations can then be entered into a table (Table 5) that assesses their potential.

**Table 5.** Example template for the assessment of potential locations (Milovanovic, 2020)

Quantitative factors	Weight score	Location A	Location B	Location C
1. Number of 3-5 star hotels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within 20 minutes walking time</li> <li>• Within 20 minutes in-vehicle time</li> </ul>	0.25			
2. Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population density in the area</li> <li>• Number of local events</li> <li>• Number of international events</li> </ul>	0.20			

**Table 5.** Example template for the assessment of potential locations (Milovanovic, 2020) (continue)

Quantitative factors	Weight score	Location A	Location B	Location C
3. Number of facilities, entertainment venues, restaurants, recreational areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markets, shopping centers, department stores</li> <li>• Specialized department stores</li> <li>• Sports Centers</li> <li>• Public spaces / landmarks</li> <li>• Learning Centers / museums</li> <li>• Extreme sports facilities / adventure parks</li> <li>• Recreational areas</li> <li>• Entertainment venues / shows</li> </ul>	0.15			
4. Airport access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distance (kilometers)</li> <li>• Duration (minutes)</li> </ul>	0.15			
5. Efficiency of transport infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass transportation systems (number and type)</li> <li>• Main road width (meters)</li> </ul>	0.10			
6. Checklist of other considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future expansion</li> <li>• Economic impact on local area</li> <li>• Traffic and transportation</li> <li>• Safety</li> </ul>	0.15			
Total	1.00			

Once the evaluation is completed, the three locations with the highest total scores are then taken for further comparison of their advantages and disadvantages, existing condition, and local community participation, to arrive at the most suitable location for a convention center in that city.

## 5. Application of the assessment criteria for selecting MICE destination cities and convention center

In section 4.1-4.5, it can be seen that there are various criteria that can be used for the assessment of a MICE destination and its convention center. The process of evaluating a city and determining an appropriately-sized convention center should be implemented in hierarchy of scale from the scale of the city to the scale of the convention center in order for it to be competitive regionally. Figure 5 shows that the assessment process consists of two main stages:

### 5.1 Assessment at city scale

(1) The assessment of target cities to consider which of the cities has the most potential as a MICE destination in Thailand.

(2) After selecting a potential destination, the next step is to assess it against regional competitors in order to compare and set targets for destination development to be on the same level or to gain an advantage over the competition.

## 5.2 Assessment at convention center scale

(1) Assessment of a suitable location for the construction of a convention center in the selected destination city.

(2) Determining the size and main facilities of the convention center by comparing its positioning with other major convention centers in competitor cities.

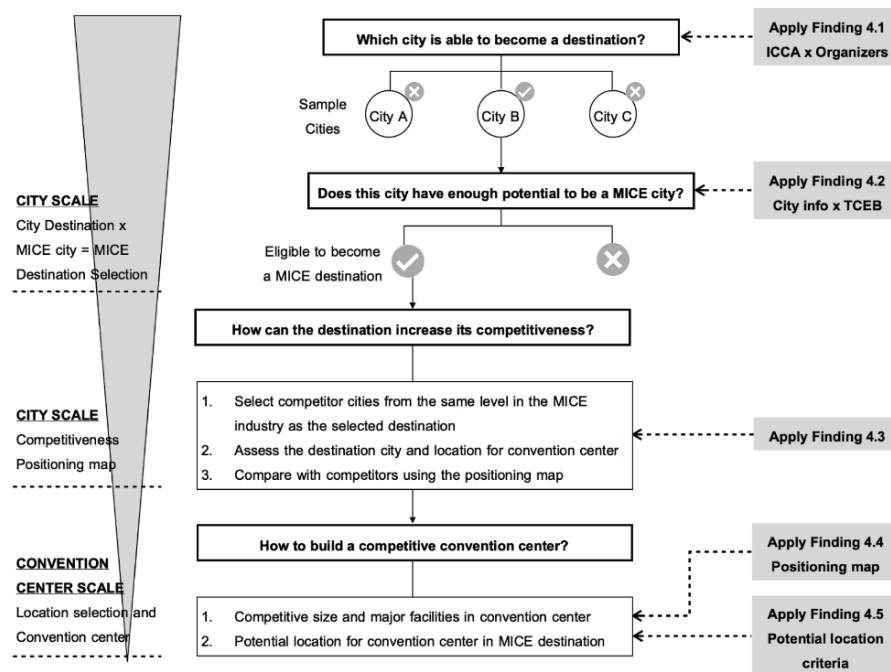


Figure 5. The application of the assessment criteria at each scale.

## 6. Conclusion

The study of the factors and assessment criteria for MICE destinations at the scales of the city and the convention center has revealed the most important factors that can be found in all of the assessment tools are: (1) convention center site context, which includes the city's characteristics such as attractiveness, city image, environment, and surrounding MICE tourism related facilities in the neighborhood; (2) the MICE venue or the convention center, which includes convention halls, break out rooms, exhibition areas and venue facilities; (3) accessibility, which includes the access to the destination city as well as the access to the convention center area itself; (4) financial characteristics of the city and cost/expense for the delegates; and (5) city support and political stability, including community and local support. These criteria also require sufficient data and precision to efficiently assess the MICE destination. Thus, the city or venue owner could prepare the major criteria to drive readiness and competitiveness of the MICE destination. The TMVS and AMVS have certified 411 and 96 convention centers, respectively, in Thailand (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], 2021b). The certification presents the convention center readiness of place for a MICE venue; however, the convention center site context is important in setting targets and development goals for a convention center that will be competitive on a regional level. It is necessary to have parallel development of the physical aspects of the city to accommodate the needs of convention organizers. It also is necessary to carry out studies on

direct and indirect competitors at the regional and domestic levels by studying the strategies and physical aspects of their convention venues to determine the appropriate direction for a development program. In addition to evaluating the size and type of convention facilities appropriate to a particular destination, the developments of infrastructure and MICE-related supporting facilities such as the number of quality accommodations, transportation system, the city's image, and other urban amenities and services, are all conducive to transforming a city into a competitive and attractive MICE destination.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, S.K. and P.K. Methodology, S.K. and P.K. Analysis, S.K. and P.K. Data curation, S.K. Writing-Original draft preparation, S.K. Writing-review and editing, P.K. Visualization, S.K. Supervision, P.K. Project administration, S.K. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Reference

- Bueno, A. R., Urbistondo, P. A., & Alcazar Martínez, B. D. (2020). The MICE tourism value chain: Proposal of a conceptual framework and analysis of disintermediation. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 21(3), 177-200. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2020.1740851>
- Chen, C. F. (2006). Applying the analytical hierarchy process (AHP) approach to convention site selection. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(2), 167–174. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287506291593>
- Clark, D. (2005). Considering a convention center: Ten questions communities will confront. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 6(1-2), 5-21.
- Gigauri, I. (2019). Applying perceptual mapping method for successful positioning strategy. *International Journal of Management and Business Sciences*, 1(1),14-23.
- Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). (2017). *MTTM-15 meeting, incentives, conferences and expositions (MICE): Unit-5 planning mice*. IGNOU. <https://egyankosh.ac.in/handle/123456789/11648>
- International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). (2019). *ICCA statistics report: Country & city rankings*. <https://www.stnet.ch/app/uploads/2021/07/ICCA-Statistics-2019.pdf>
- International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). (2009). ICCA intelligence: International association meetings: Bidding and decision-making. <https://studylib.net/doc/8875143/bidding-and-decision-making>
- Liu, Y-C. (2010). *Bid for an international meeting: A guide for Taiwanese associations* [Master' thesis, University of Nevada]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/1702053>
- Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE). (2016). *Meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions*. [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/references-and-resources/tourism/MICE\\_English\\_2016.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/pshe/references-and-resources/tourism/MICE_English_2016.pdf)
- MICE Capabilities Development Department and Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (2018?). *ASEAN MICE venue standards certification manual (category: meeting room)*. [https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/AMVS\\_-\\_Meeting\\_Room\\_\(Final\\_Revised\).pdf](https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/AMVS_-_Meeting_Room_(Final_Revised).pdf)
- MICE Capabilities Development Department and Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (2019). *Thailand MICE venue standard (category: meeting room) 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2019*. [https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/TMVS\\_Meeting\\_EN\\_2019.pdf](https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/TMVS_Meeting_EN_2019.pdf)
- MICERS. (2017). *7 Reasons to promote the MICE segment*. *Micers By Meetbarceló*. <https://micers.com/en/7-reasons-to-promote-the-mice-segment/>



- Milovanovic, M. (2020). *Competitive index 2020: International convention destination*. <https://www.pot.gov.pl/attachments/article/8636/Competitive-Index-2020.pdf>
- Para A., & Kachniewska, M. (2014). Determinants of convention & conference site selection: The polish event planners' perspective. In F. Dias, S. Oliveira, J. Kosmaczewska & J. Kosmaczewska (Eds.), *New trends in tourism research: A polish perspective* (pp. 150-162). GITUR - Tourism Research Group of Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. <https://iconline.ipleiria.pt/handle/10400.8/3448>
- Soonsan, N. (2018). Determinants of convention site selection in the context of meeting room in hotel: An organizers' perspective. *RMUTT Global Business and Economics Review (GBER)*, 13(2), 67-78.
- Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (2021a). *Lakkēn kān pramāṇ mū'ang phūa pen mai si tī* [MICE city assessment criteria]. <https://elibrary.tceb.or.th/getattachment/3494941c-229e-480e-ba81-ae96b71a3aad/6243.aspx>
- Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (n.d.). *Strategic plan. TCEB*. <https://www.businesseventsthailand.com/th/about-us/strategic-plan>
- Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (2018). *TCEB beats 2018 MICE target-generates revenue of more than 2000 billion baht*. <https://www.businesseventsthailand.com/th/press-media/news-press-release/detail/847-๕-รก-จโม่ข-ป-2561-โทยโตะเก-นเป-า-สร-างรายโตะ-กว-า-สองแสนล-านบาท>
- Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB). (2021b). *Thailand & Asean MICE venue standards* (7th edition directory). [https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/TMVS\\_AMVS\\_Directory\\_2021.pdf](https://www.micecapabilities.com/mice/uploads/attachments/TMVS_AMVS_Directory_2021.pdf)
- United Nations Environment Programme & World Tourism Organization. (2005). *Making tourism more sustainable: A guide for policy makers*. [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8741/-Making%20Tourism%20More%20Sustainable\\_%20A%20Guide%20for%20Policy%20Makers-2005445.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8741/-Making%20Tourism%20More%20Sustainable_%20A%20Guide%20for%20Policy%20Makers-2005445.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2014). *Global report on the meetings industry*. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284416097>

