

## VIETNAM

### Country Summary of Higher Education

#### **Background:**

**Recent expansion of tertiary education sector:** Higher education in Vietnam has experienced impressive growth since the introduction of *Doi Moi*<sup>1</sup> in 1986, and especially the issuance of decree (Decree 90) in 1993, in which the Government committed Vietnam to the unification and restructuring of its higher education system<sup>2</sup>. In 1992-1993, there were approximately 162,000 students enrolled in 110 higher education institutions, making the gross enrollment rate just 2%. Today, 1.3 million students are enrolled in approximately 230 institutions, making the gross enrollment approximately 13%.

**Tertiary education system:** Vietnamese higher education system consists of both public and non-public colleges and universities for those who have passed a secondary school leaving exam. Colleges offer only associate degrees, whereas universities offer associate, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees. During academic year 2004-2005, 88% of 230 higher education institutions were public universities or colleges owned and managed by central or regional public authorities. Non-public higher education institutions comprise private colleges and universities, people-founded schools and semi-public institutions.

**Quality assurance mechanisms:** To date, Vietnam has very limited experience with implementing quality assurance for its higher education system, although it has been evolving in the past few years. In 2002, Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) took an important step in addressing quality in higher education by establishing the Office of Accreditation within MoET's Department of Higher Education. Subsequently, in 2003, the office was consolidated with the Office of Assessment to form the Department of Assessment and Accreditation (GDAA). A primary objective of the new office was to develop a set of provisional regulations on accreditation for higher education institutions. In 2005, MoET issued interim quality standards for higher education institutions and began implementing an institutional accreditation process based on self-evaluation. The GOV also made important progress in the area of quality by stating in the Education Law of 2005 that accreditation of institutions in Vietnam will be done by an independent agency as has been seen as in most developed countries.

**Government Strategy & Policy Reforms:** The GOV sets clear goals for higher education in its "Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010," (SEDP). The SEDP aims for an overall quantitative goal of "increasing enrollment in universities and colleges by 10 percent annually, to reach a level of 200 students over 10,000 population by 2010" and an overall qualitative goal of "approaching the advanced education standards of the region and the world." The GOV elaborates on its goals for higher education in its "Higher Education Reform Agenda" (HERA) for 2006-2020, which develops forward-looking strategy for the development of higher education and research. The GOV has set the following targets for the higher education sector: (1) revenue from science and technology activities increased to 40% by 2010, and to 60% by 2020; (2) proportion of university teaching staff with masters level degrees increased to 40% by 2010, and to 60% by 2020; (3) proportion of university teaching staff with doctoral level degrees increased to 25% by 2010, and to 35% by 2020; and (4) ratio of university students to teaching staff reduced to 20:1 by 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> The policy *doi moi* was declared by the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam and replaced the centrally planned economy with a regulated market economy. The policy had an immediate and significant impact on the economy and progressively reengaged Vietnam with the international economy.

<sup>2</sup> Decree No. 90/CP, dated November 24, 1993.

## Summary Data Table on Higher Education (Data in 2004)

Enrollment	Total Enrollment	1,300,000
	% of Female	43
	% of Private	13
Gross Enrollment Rate	Total	13
	Male	11
	Female	9
Student Teachers Ratios		1:30
Teaching Staff	Total Number	39,346
	% of Female	40
	% of teachers with Maters	32.7
	% of teachers with Doctorate	14.4
Gross Graduation Rates*	Total	N/A
	Male	N/A
	Female	N/A
Total Public Expenditure on Education	% of GDP	4% (2002)
	% of Govt. Expenditure	19% (2006)
Total Public Expenditure on Higher Education	% of GDP	0.41 (2002)
Number of Higher Education Institutions	Total	230
	Universities	93
	Colleges	137
	Public	201
	Non-Public	29

Source: Global Education Digest 2006, UNESCO / Vietnam: Higher Education and Skills for Growth, World Bank, 2007

\* Number of graduates regardless of age in a given level or program expressed as a percentage of the population at the theoretical graduation age for that level or program

### ISSUES:

Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GER (13%) is below that of other high-performing countries in the region.</li> <li>• Enrollment is concentrated in a few academic disciplines. Nearly 50% of all students major in economics/business and education.</li> <li>• The share of overall enrollment in the non-public sector is too low.</li> </ul>
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females, minority ethnic groups, the less socially privileged have less opportunity to participate in higher education.</li> </ul>
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The student/faculty ratio (30:1) is too high by international standards.</li> <li>• Faculty qualifications are generally low and vary significantly across types of higher education institutions.</li> <li>• Lack of internal and external quality measures and controls result in academic programs poor in content and execution.</li> </ul>
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linkages between university and industry are weak.</li> <li>• Information on graduate employment, labor markets and skills is weak.</li> <li>• Skill shortages (quality and quantity) are an increasing bottleneck for firms and the growing economy in general.</li> </ul>
Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public expenditure on higher education as % of GDP is too low.</li> <li>• Too little diversification of funding sources</li> </ul>
Governance/ Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The slow pace of change in the governance structure of higher education, especially its centrally planned vertical organization over funding, admissions, curriculum content, and personnel management and planning.</li> <li>• Institutions have little experience in managing themselves because the GoV have been responsible for almost all management decisions.</li> </ul>