

# VIET NAM VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING REPORT

## 2021



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# VIET NAM VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING REPORT 2021



## PREFACE

The English version of the Viet Nam Vocational Education and Training (VET) Report 2021 is a publication developed jointly by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in Germany and the Vietnamese-German Programme “Reform of TVET in Viet Nam”, which is implemented jointly by the Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Charting key performance areas of the Vietnamese VET sector in a year marked by the devastation of the Covid pandemic, the publication is aimed at providing information and analyses to help further international understanding of Viet Nam’s VET system, and to create a reference work for academic research, policymaking, and practice.

Besides the preface and key findings, the Viet Nam VET Report 2021 in English consists of the following chapters:

1. Overview of VET policies
2. VET for the labour market
3. Network of VET institutes
4. VET admissions and graduations
5. VET teachers and management staff
6. National occupational skills standards, assessment and certification of national occupational skills
7. VET quality assurance and accreditation
8. VET finances

The English version of the Viet Nam VET Report 2021 was extensively inspired and informed by the Vietnamese version of the Viet Nam VET Report 2021 released by the Vietnamese National Institute of Vocational Education and Training (NIVT). It also includes data presented in previous Viet Nam VET reports from 2014 to 2019, as well as data provided by relevant authorities such as the General Statistics Office of Viet Nam (GSO), DVET, MoLISA’s Department of Employment, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), etc. Remarks and assessments presented in this report are based on scientific and objective research methods, and do not necessarily reflect the official viewpoints of state management agencies.

Because of the unique connection between the English and Vietnamese versions of the Viet Nam VET Report 2021, we would like to express our special appreciation to the team of researchers at NIVT for the valuable inputs that resulted from their research and reporting work.

The English version of the Viet Nam VET Report 2021 is available on the website of the Vietnamese-German Programme “Reform of TVET in Viet Nam” ([www.tvet-vietnam.org](http://www.tvet-vietnam.org)) and on the website of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (<https://www.bibb.de/en/9550.php>). We hope to offer you useful insights into the Vietnamese VET sector and would highly appreciate receiving your feedback to further improve on our work. Please do not hesitate to send your comments and inquiries to [office.tvet@giz.de](mailto:office.tvet@giz.de)



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## KEY FINDINGS

*The key findings section of this report provides a summary of the VET sector's performance highlights in 2021 in areas including policy development, responsiveness to the needs of the labour market, enrolment and graduation, network restructuring, teachers' development, quality assurance, national occupational skills standards development and VET financing.*

1. The VET development strategy for the 2021-2030 period with a vision to 2045 was issued to guide the sector's advancement and define specific targets to be achieved by 2025 and 2030. Eight broad groups of solutions were identified, of which 'digitalisation, the modernisation of teaching facilities and innovations in teaching programmes and training methods' and 'the development of VET personnel' were recognised as 'breakthrough solutions' for the attainment of the expected outcomes.

The approval of Circular 35/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH to regulate quality standards and the assessment process of high-quality colleges was another key policy development in 2021. The Circular contributes to the implementation of the VET strategy, which envisages a VET system in which 70 VET institutes qualify as high-quality colleges by 2025.

2. Untrained workers continued to make up the majority (73.9%) of the labour force. As the pandemic continued in 2021, untrained workers and workers with lower qualification levels were heavily impacted by unemployment and income cuts, while workers with college and university degrees emerged relatively unscathed. Among workers with VET qualifications, those with elementary-level certificates consistently outperformed college

graduates and workers with intermediate-level degrees on monthly income levels from 2017 to 2020. In 2021, elementary-level graduates continued to outearn intermediate-level graduates and were paid only 2.2% less than college graduates.

3. The restructuring of the VET sector resulted in a slow but steady decrease of VET institutes over the past five years. The contraction is most significant and consistent among secondary VET schools, with a 19% decrease between 2017 and 2021. The distribution of VET institutes among socio-economic regions is uneven, with the Red River Delta and North Central and Central Coastal Area accounting for over half (51.22%) of the country's VET institutes and 57.28% of its colleges.

4. Both enrolments and graduations fell to a record low in 2021, and the gap between enrolments and graduations widened significantly compared to pre-Covid years. A total of 2,030,440 learners enrolled in VET in 2021, and over 1.7 million graduated from the system. Since elementary and intermediate programmes accounted respectively for 75.9% and 13.8% while college programmes<sup>1</sup> made up only for 10.3% of VET enrolments, the unusually big gap between enrolment and graduation numbers could suggest a significant dropout rate in 2021.

<sup>1</sup> VET programmes last between three to twelve months at the elementary level, one to three years at the intermediate level and two to three years at the college level.

5. The slow but steady decline in the number of VET teachers resulted in 5.8% fewer VET teachers in 2021 than 2018. The challenges of online teaching, and the disruption of further and in-service training were the two outstanding issues affecting VET teachers in 2021. Although 100% of VET teachers were reported to have adequate academic qualifications, only 70% were found to have met the required occupational skills standards to teach practical subjects, and about 50% of teachers working in colleges and secondary VET schools were qualified to teach integrated subjects.

6. Due to Covid-19 and budget constraints, ministries did not execute the development of national occupational skill standards (NOSS) and no new NOS tests were compiled in 2021. As at December 2021, a total of 199 sets of NOSS and 96 sets of NOS tests were available for use. NOS assessments are only available for up to three of the five NOSS levels.

7. Despite the impacts of Covid-19, the upward trend of VET institutes, especially colleges undertaking self-evaluations and applying for accreditation continued uninterrupted in 2020 and 2021. In 2021, 69.4% of colleges submitted their self-evaluation reports. A total of four independent accrediting agencies are licensed to conduct institutional and programmatic accreditation. 46 colleges, three secondary VET schools and 40 training programmes gained accreditation in 2021.

8. State budget funding for recurrent expenditures in VET declined by 8.4% in 2021 compared to 2020. As a share of the total state budget allocation for recurrent expenditure, funding for VET has been on a downward trend since 2018. In 2021, three new projects under national target programmes for VET were approved for implementation over the 2021 – 2025 period, but disbursement for these projects has been very low.

# CHAPTER 1

## OVERVIEW OF VET DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

*In December 2021, the government issued the strategy for the development of vocational education and training (VET) for the period 2021 - 2030 with a vision to 2045, in which it asks for a rapid development of the VET sector and prescribes eight broad groups of solutions to achieve the specific targets set forth for 2025 & 2030. Eight programmes/projects were also approved to start in 2021 as part of the strategy implementation process. Meanwhile, MoLISA continued to consolidate its policy measures to facilitate access to VET for school leavers and improve the quality of VET delivery through greater standardization.*

### 1.1 VET development strategy

#### 1.1.1 Overall objective and specific targets

The strategy for the development of VET for the period 2021-2030, with a vision to 2045 explains the government's viewpoint on the role and core values of the VET system, sets out specific targets to be achieved by 2025 and 2030, and prescribes eight groups of solutions to achieve those targets. The government envisages a VET system that is demand-oriented, open, flexible, inclusive, modern, and aspires to regional and international standards. VET development is positioned as the most important endeavour in ensuring the country's human resources quality.

The overall objective set out for the system is to 'develop rapidly to meet the diverse needs of the labour market and the people, and the increasingly high demand for quantity, quality, and composition of the country's skilled human resources.' Specific targets to be achieved by 2025 and 2030 include metrics on i) enrolment of school leavers, ii) training for the labour force, iii) qualifications of VET teachers and managers, iv) training occupations and learning outcomes developed according to the National Qualifications Framework's classification of qualifications levels, v) accredited VET

programmes and institutes, and vi) rankings of VET institutes, from national and regional VET centres to high-quality VET institutes.

#### 1.1.2 Solutions

The eight groups of solutions include i) the consolidation of the legal framework and enhancement of state management of VET, ii) digital transformation, modernisation of training facilities, training programmes, and training methods, iii) capacity development for VET teachers & managers, iv) increased linkages between VET and industry and the labour market, v) scientific research and technology transfer, innovation, career orientation, and entrepreneurship, vi) increased funding and efficiency of financial investment in VET, vii) communication and promotion of VET, viii) further international integration.

Solutions ii) and iii) above were identified as 'breakthrough' solutions for the attainment of the strategic outcomes set out for the sector.

#### 1.1.3 VET development programmes/projects

To implement the strategy, the government approved eight projects/programmes to be kickstarted in 2021, including:

1. The project "Development of VET in poor and disadvantaged areas" within the National

Target Programme for Sustainable Poverty Reduction for the 2021 – 2025 period

2. “VET for rural workers” components within the National Target Programme on Building New-Style Rural Areas for the 2021 – 2025 period
3. The project “Development of VET and job creation for workers in ethnic minority and mountainous areas” within the National Target Programme on Socio-Economic Development in ethnic minority and mountainous areas for the 2021 – 2030 period
4. The programme “Training, retraining and Upskilling of human resources to meet the demand of the fourth industrial revolution”
5. The programme “Digital transformation in VET to 2025 with a vision to 2030”
6. The project “National centres for high-quality vocational training and practice in northern, central and southern regions”
7. The planning for the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework in VET qualifications for the 2021 – 2025 period
8. The programme “Strengthening of legal education and legal awareness-raising at VET institutes for the 2021 – 2027 period”.

Another seven programmes/projects were in the pipeline for approval in 2022 – 2023.

### 1.2 Policies regulating the operation of VET institutes

In 2021 the Government issued Decree 60/2021/NĐ-CP to regulate the financial autonomy mechanism of public non-business units, which covers VET institutes. This long-awaited decree provides, among other things,

specific instructions on the different levels of financial autonomy, the requirements for autonomy eligibility and the procedures to be conferred autonomy status.

Replacing two circulars issued previously in 2016<sup>2</sup>, circular 14/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH and circular 15/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH were issued in 2021 to regulate respectively the charter of secondary VET schools and that of colleges. These two circulars reflect new policy developments in recent years that affect the operation of VET institutes, including regulations on the permeability between general education and VET, VET autonomy and VET accreditation.

2021 also saw the approval of circular 35/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH which regulates the assessment of high-quality colleges. The circular defines five groups of assessment criteria including i) student numbers and composition and training programmes, ii) teachers’ qualifications, iii) industry linkages, iv) school governance and v) graduates’ qualifications. The approval of circular 35/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH provides a timely policy tool for the VET sector to work towards the target of “70 high-quality colleges” set forth by the VET development strategy.

### 1.3 Policies on VET enrolment regulations and increased permeability

Circular 05/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH guiding VET enrolment regulations and the identification of enrolment quotas for college and intermediate-level training programmes further enhances previous policy developments directed at increasing permeability between different levels of VET and between general education and VET. The 2019 Education Law allows VET students to pursue higher secondary

<sup>2</sup> Circular 46/2016/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on December 28th, 2016 stipulating charter regulations for colleges and Circular 47/2016/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on December 28th, 2016 stipulating charter regulations for secondary VET schools

education while being enrolled at VET institutes. Circular 05/2021/TT-BLĐTĐBXH builds on this regulation by making it possible for graduates of intermediate-level VET programmes to apply for college studies upon successful completion of the required body of high school knowledge. With these new policy developments, VET institutes can position themselves as the training service providers of VET and general education from Grade 9 to college programmes. For students, the pathway from Grade 9 to college is also made easier as the requirement to successfully pass the national high school graduation exam is removed and replaced by the completion of the required high school body of knowledge, which is more easily attainable and can be certified by training service providers.

#### **1.4 Regulations on training programmes and training materials**

In 2021 another 116 sets of economic-technical cost norms<sup>3</sup>, and 98 lists of required training equipment<sup>4</sup> were issued for training occupations at the intermediate and college levels. MoLISA also issued circular 32/2021/TT-BLĐTĐBXH to regulate the mainstreaming of additional knowledge and skills for students of VET institutes. Accounting for up to 10% of training time at the elementary level, and up to 5% of training time for intermediate and college levels, these additional knowledge and skills are aimed at improving the quality of training and students' competencies, and include a wide and varied range of areas e.g. public speaking, information technology, entrepreneurship, scientific research, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Circular 10/2021/TT-BLĐTĐBXH issued on September 10th, 2021 promulgating 116 economic-technical cost norms for training occupations at the intermediate and college levels

<sup>4</sup> Circular 16/2021/TT-BLĐTĐBXH issued on November 8th, 2021 promulgating the lists of minimum training equipment for 98 training occupations

## CHAPTER 2

# VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE LABOUR MARKET

The Vietnamese labour force shrank by almost 10% between 2019 and 2021. Untrained workers continued to account for almost three quarters of the labour force while university graduates made up the largest share of trained workers. As the pandemic continued in 2021, untrained workers and workers with lower qualification levels were heavily affected by unemployment and income cuts while workers with college and university qualifications emerged relatively unscathed.

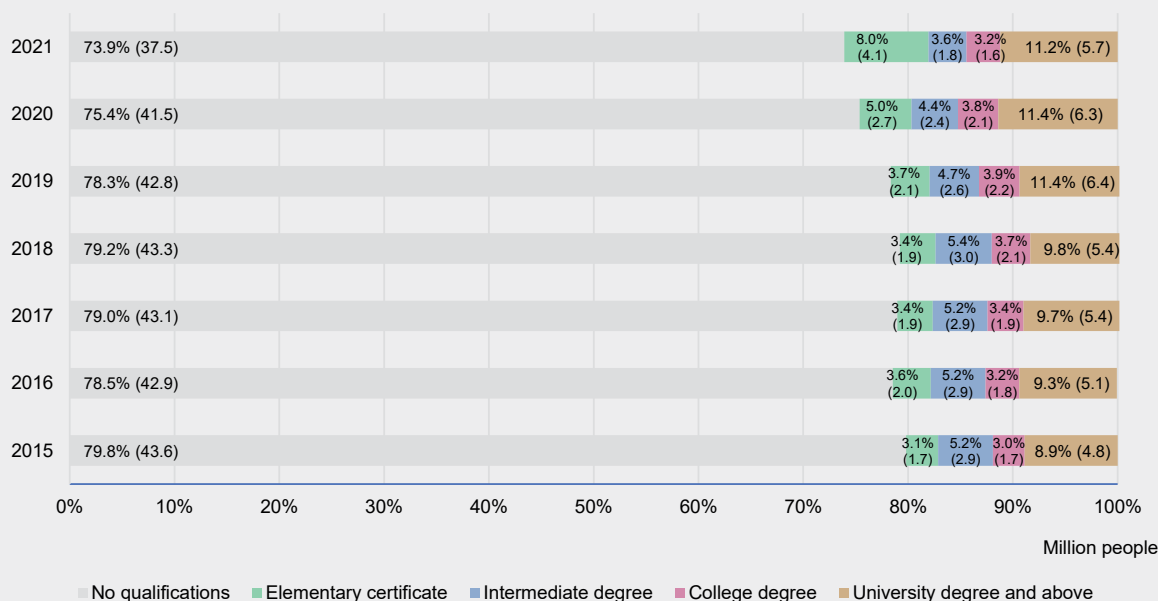
### 2.1 Labour supply

#### 2.1.1 Labour force by qualification

In 2021, Viet Nam had a labour force of 50.74 million people, 7.89% (4.40 million people) fewer than in 2020 and 9.58% (5.4 million people) fewer than in pre-covid 2019. Trained workers holding qualifications requiring a minimum of three months' training accounted

for 26.1% (13.24 million people) of the labour force, against 24.6% in 2020 and 21.7% in 2019 (figure 2.1). Among the trained workers, university graduates accounted for 11.2% of the labour force, followed by elementary-level graduates (8.0%) and intermediate-level graduates (3.6%). College graduates came in last at 3.2%.

**Figure 1: Labour force by qualification, 2015 to 2021 (in % and absolute terms)**



(Source: Calculations from Labour and Employment Survey, Q4 2015 to Q4 2021, GSO)

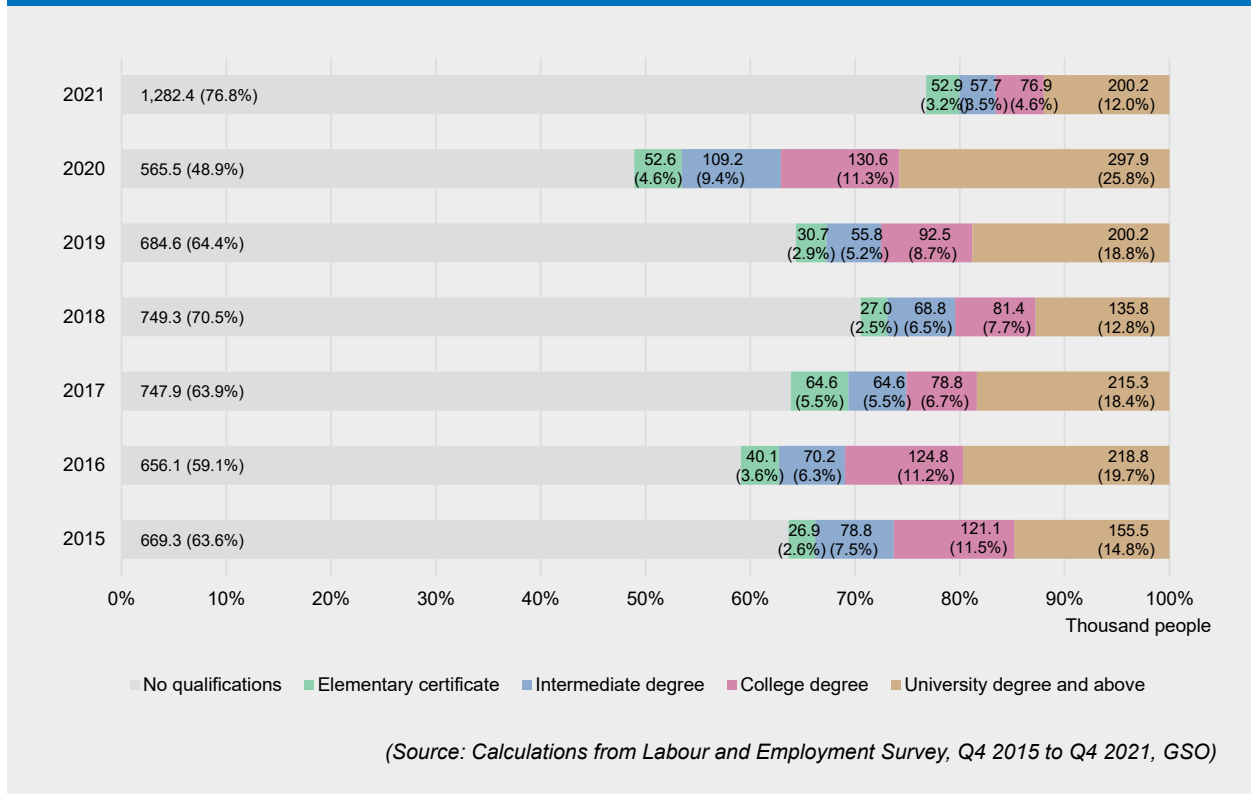


### 2.1.2 Unemployment

The unemployment rate among the working age population, which hovered around 2% before the pandemic, rose sharply to 3.29% (1.67 million people) in 2021. The number of people with no professional qualifications becoming

unemployed also increased significantly while trained workers were much less likely to be unemployed. University graduates continued to represent the largest group of unemployed trained workers, accounting for 12% of the unemployed working age population (figure 2.2).

**Figure 2: Working age unemployment by qualification level, 2015 to 2021 (in absolute terms and %)**



### 2.2 Salaries and wages

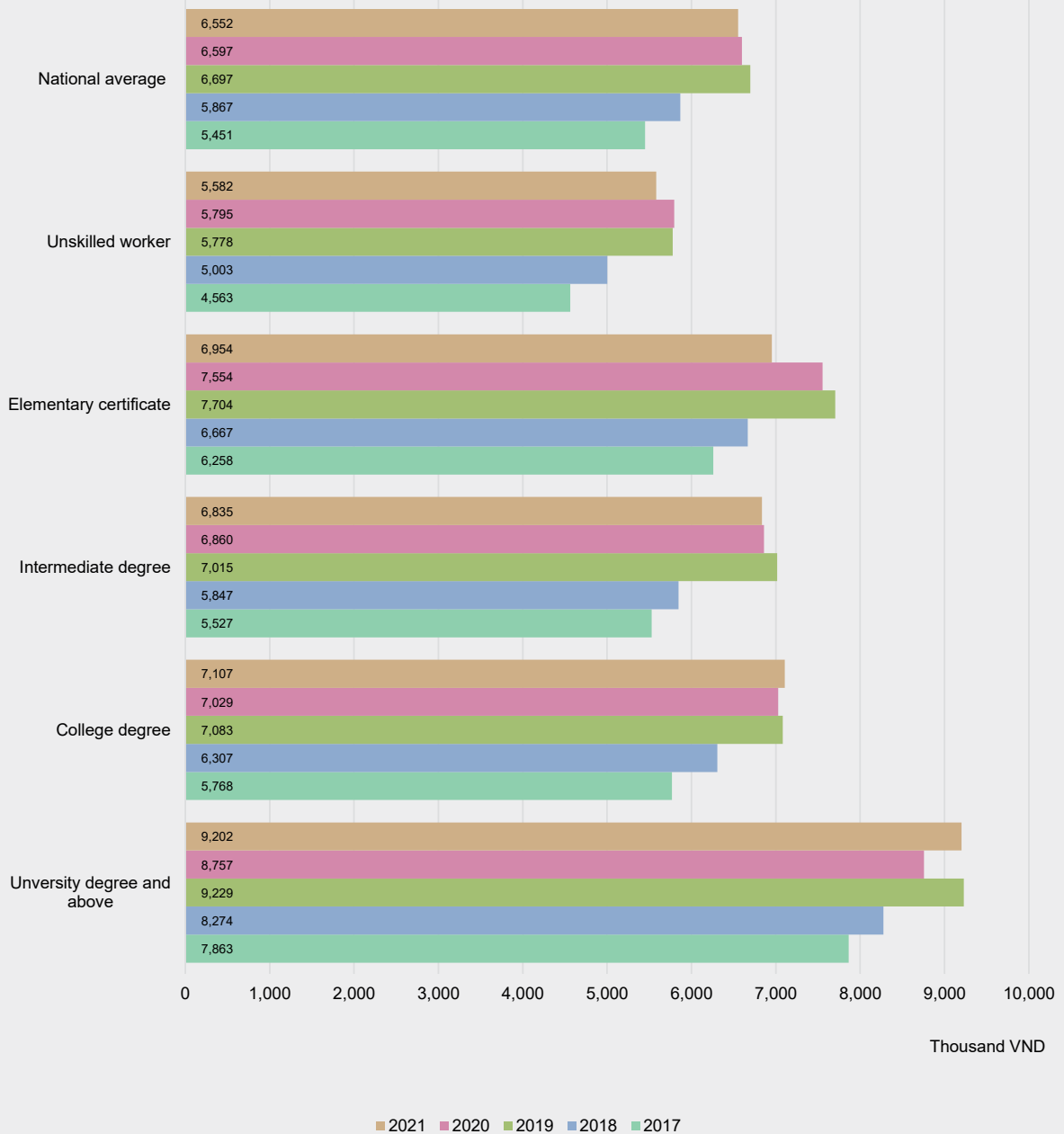
This section reports only on the income of employed salary earners, including salaries/wages, bonuses and work allowances (overtime payment, hazardous work, etc.).

The average Vietnamese salaried worker took home VND 6.552 million (≈USD 280.0) per month in 2021, about 2.2% less than before the pandemic struck in 2019. Workers with college and university degrees and above were the only group whose monthly incomes in 2021 bounced back to almost the same or slightly higher levels than 2019. Workers with lower levels of qualifications saw their monthly

incomes fall significantly over the pandemic. Income cuts were most substantial among workers with elementary-level qualifications, who lost about 9.7% of their monthly wages compared to 2019 (figure 2.3).

Among workers with VET qualifications, those with elementary-level certificates consistently outperformed college graduates and workers with intermediate-level degrees on monthly income levels from 2017 to 2020. In 2021, elementary-level graduates continued to outearn intermediate-level graduates and were paid only 2.2% less than college graduates (figure 2.3).

**Figure 3: Average monthly income of employed salaried workers, 2017 to 2021**



(Source: GSO 2017 – 2021)

### 2.3 Cooperation between industry and VET institutes

By the end of 2021, a total of 857, 551 enterprises were registered for operation in Viet Nam.

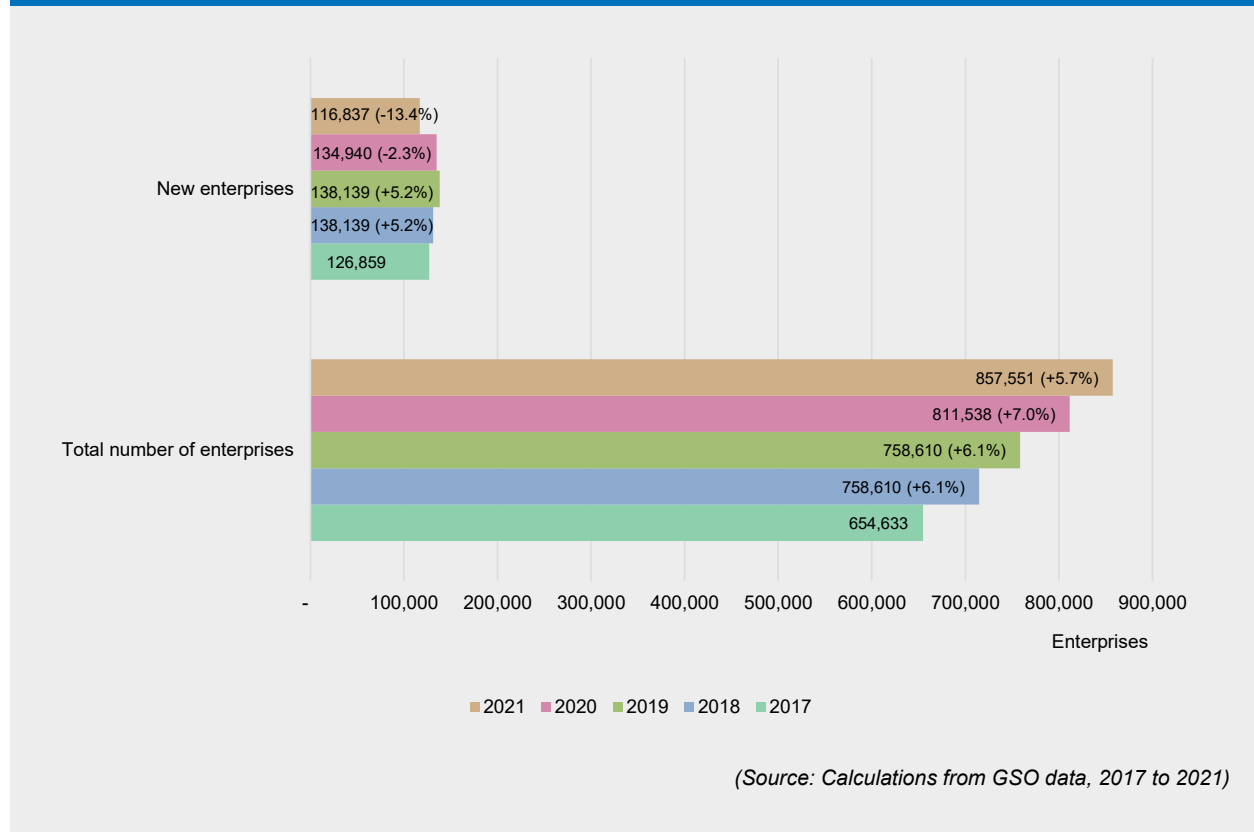
This figure represents a 5.7% increase from 2020, the lowest yearly growth in several years (figure 2.4)<sup>5</sup>. The number of new enterprises entering the market fell by 13.4% from 2020

<sup>5</sup> GSO (2023) Number of registered enterprises by industry as at December 31 annually. Available at Doanh nghiệp – General Statistics Office of Vietnam (gso.gov.vn)

while enterprises leaving the market increased by 17.8%<sup>6</sup>. Data on the number of enterprises with actual business operations were available

up to 2020 only, whereby 684,260 enterprises i.e. 84.3% of the registered firms were active on the market<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 4: Registered enterprises (in absolute terms) and annual growth rates (in %), 2017 to 2021**



As the continuing pandemic took its toll on businesses, VET-industry linkages did not experience any major improvements. In the Global Innovation Index 2021<sup>8</sup>, Viet Nam was ranked 68 out of the 132 participating economies on the ‘firms offering formal

training’ indicator, with an estimated 22.2% of companies providing training for their employees. This was a small drop from 2020<sup>9</sup>, when Viet Nam was ranked 66 out of the 131 participating economies.

<sup>6</sup> GSO (2021) *Socio-economic report for Quarter IV and the year of 2021*. Available at *Báo cáo tình hình kinh tế – xã hội quý IV và năm 2021 – General Statistics Office of Vietnam (gso.gov.vn)*

<sup>7</sup> GSO (2023) *Number of enterprises with actual business operations by industry as at December 31 annually*. Available at *PX Web – General Statistics Office of Vietnam (gso.gov.vn)*

<sup>8</sup> Cornell University, INSEAD, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (2021), *Global Innovation Index 2021*. Available at *Global Innovation Index 2021: Which are the most innovative countries? (wipo.int)*

<sup>9</sup> Cornell University, INSEAD, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (2021), *Global Innovation Index 2020*. Available at *Global Innovation Index 2020 (wipo.int)*

## CHAPTER 3 NETWORK OF VET INSTITUTES

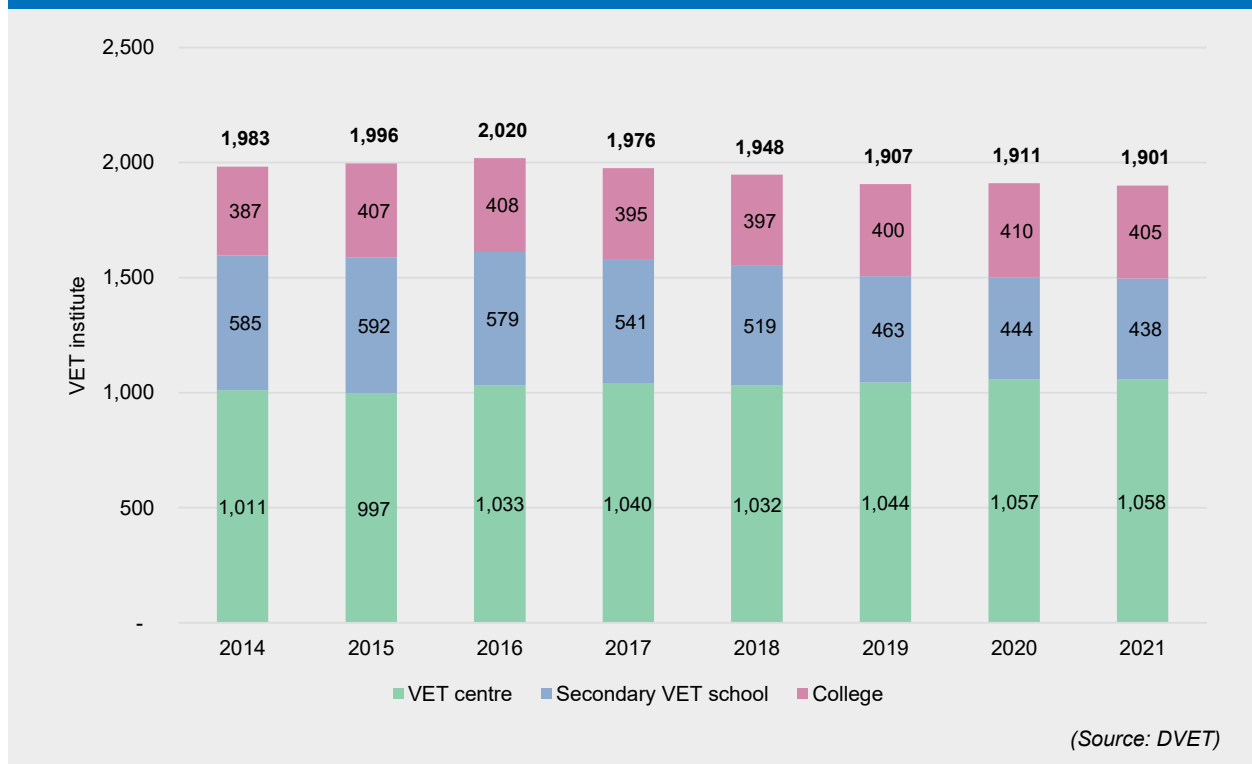
The restructuring of the network of VET institutes continued in 2021, albeit at a slower pace than previous years due to the Covid pandemic. Responding to the objectives set forth in the VET Development Strategy for 2021-2030, the process consists of merging secondary VET schools into colleges and dissolving poor-performing secondary VET schools and colleges to retain only one focal public VET provider per province<sup>10</sup>.

### 3.1. Network of VET institutes by type

By December 2021, there was a total of 1,901 VET institutes - ten less (0.5%) than in 2020 and 75 less (3.8%) than in 2017 when

MoLISA became the sole government agency in charge of VET. The number of colleges and secondary VET schools declined respectively by five (1.2%) and six (1.4%), while that of VET centres increased by one (0.1%) (figure 3.1).

**Figure 5: Number of VET institutes by type, 2014 to 2021**

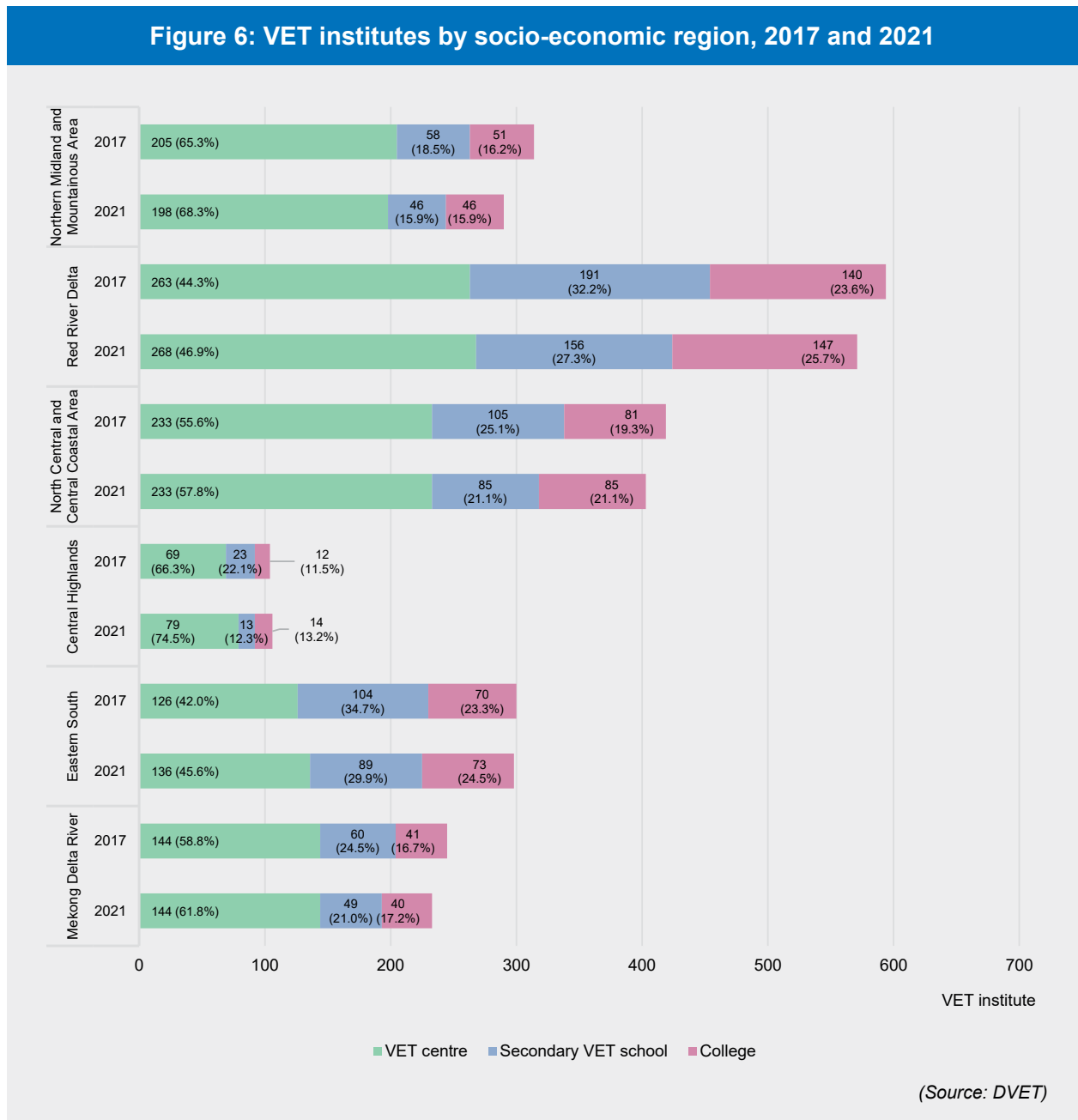


<sup>10</sup> Resolution 19-NQ/TW issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party on October 25, 2017 on the continued renovation of the organizational and management systems and improvement of quality and effectiveness of public non-business units

### 3.2 Network of VET institutes by socio-economic region

The contraction of the VET sector between 2017 and 2021 affected the six socio-economic regions differently. The Northern Midland and Mountainous Area lost 7.9% of its VET institutes over this five-year period, followed by the Mekong Delta River at 4.9%. The Red River Delta and the North Central and Coastal Area saw their VET institute numbers decline by 3.9% and 3.8% respectively while in the Eastern

South the number of VET institutes almost didn't change. The Central Highlands was the only socio-economic region to experience a slight increase with two more VET institutes in 2021 than 2017. The decrease of secondary VET schools was consistent across the board while the change in the number of colleges and VET centres varied among the six socio-economic regions. Specifically, the Northern Midland and Mountainous Area and the Mekong River Delta were the only two regions where college numbers fell between 2017 and 2021.



The number of VET centres decreased in the Northern Midland and Mountainous Area and the Red River Delta, increased in the Central Highlands and the Eastern South and remained stable in the North Central and Central Coastal Area and the Mekong River Delta.

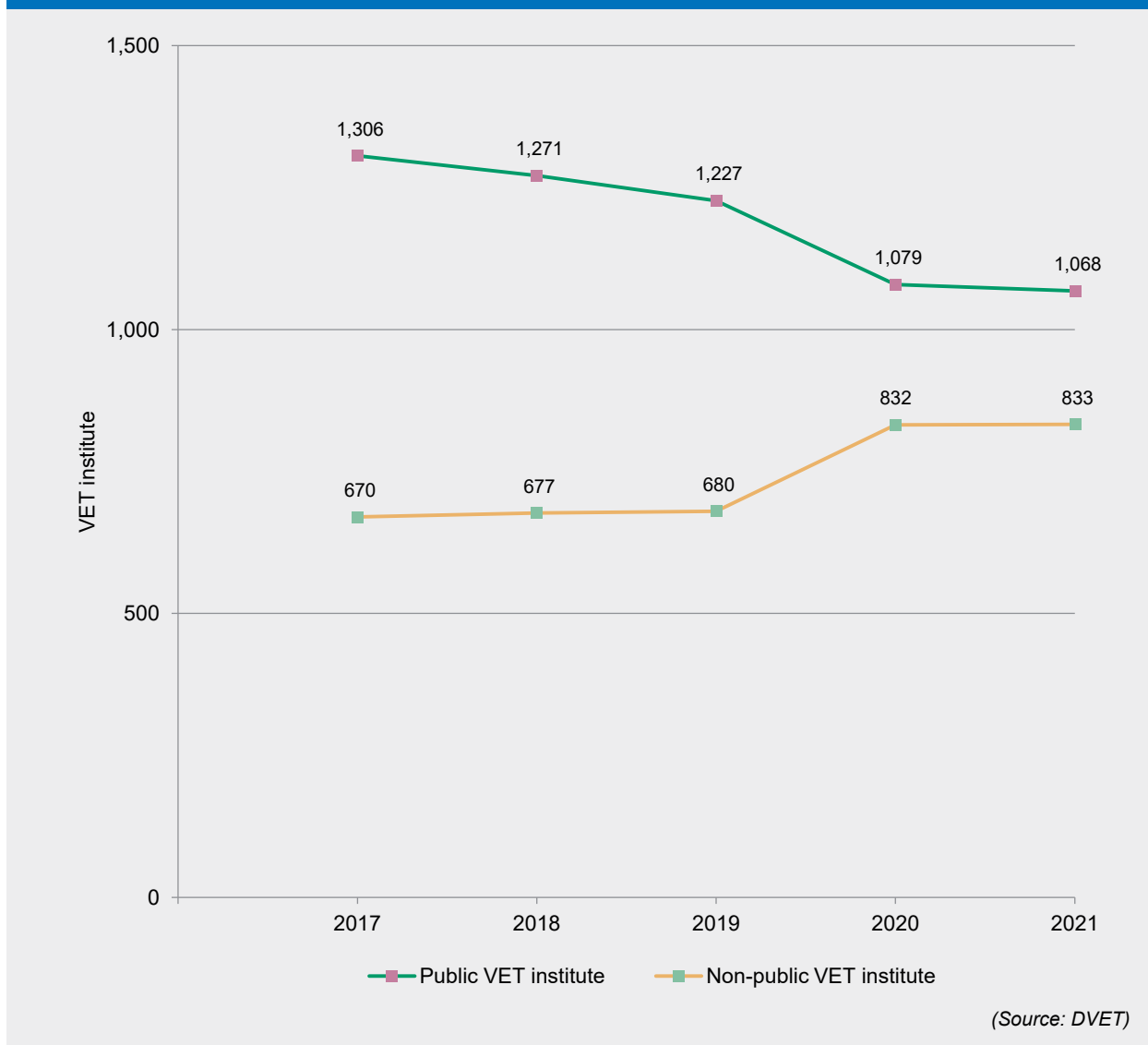
By the end of 2021, the two regions of Red River Delta and North Central and Central Coastal Area accounted for over half (51.22%) of the country’s VET institutes, and 57.28% of its colleges. The distribution of colleges remained particularly uneven. Colleges accounted for over 20% of the total number of VET institutes in each of the three regions of Red River Delta, the North Central and Central Coastal

Area and the Eastern South. Meanwhile, in the Central Highlands, the Northern Midland and Mountainous Area, and the Mekong River Delta, colleges made up only 13%, 15% and 17% respectively of the total number of VET institutes (figure 3.2).

### 3.3 Network of VET institutes by type of ownership

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of public VET institutes decreased by 18% - from 1,306 to 1,069 institutes, while non-public institutes increased by 25.5% - from 663 to 832 institutes (figure 3.3).

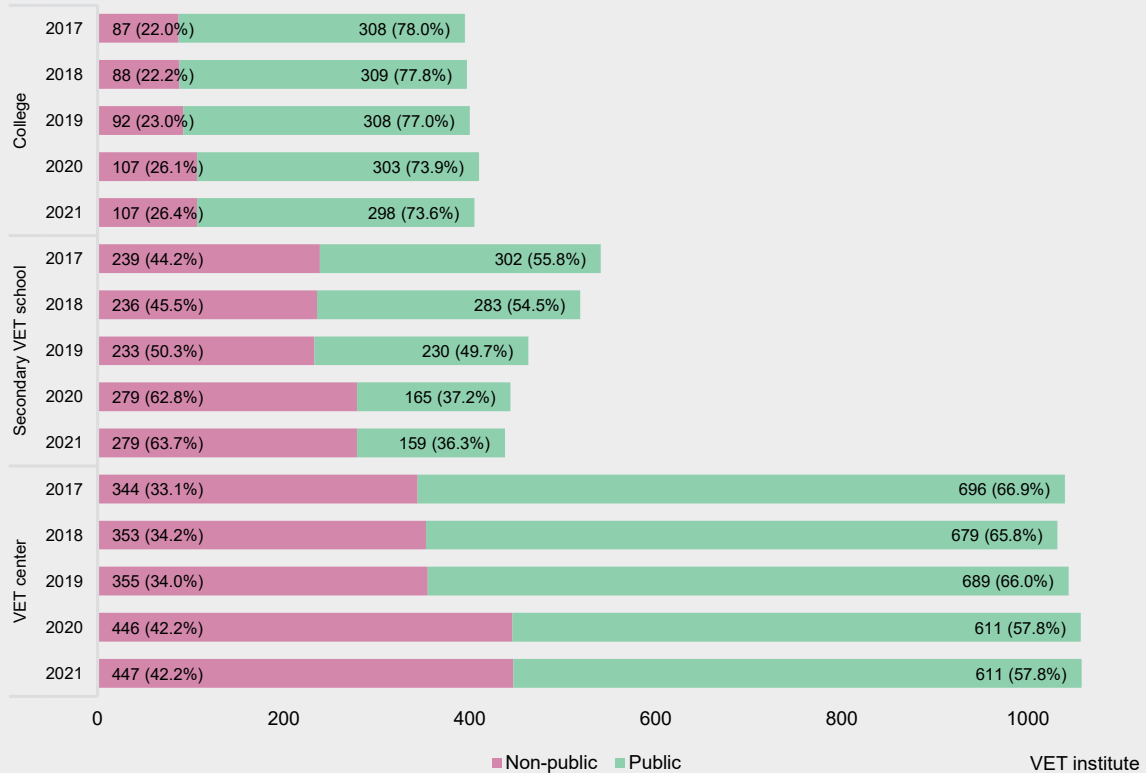
Figure 7: VET institutes by type of ownership, 2017 to 2021



The decrease of public secondary VET schools and increase of non-public VET centres had been most significant. In 2017, over half (55.8%) of secondary VET schools and ≈67%

of VET centres were state-owned. In 2021, these figures fell respectively to 36.3% and ≈58% (figure 3.4).

**Figure 8: VET institutes by type of ownership, 2017 to 2021**

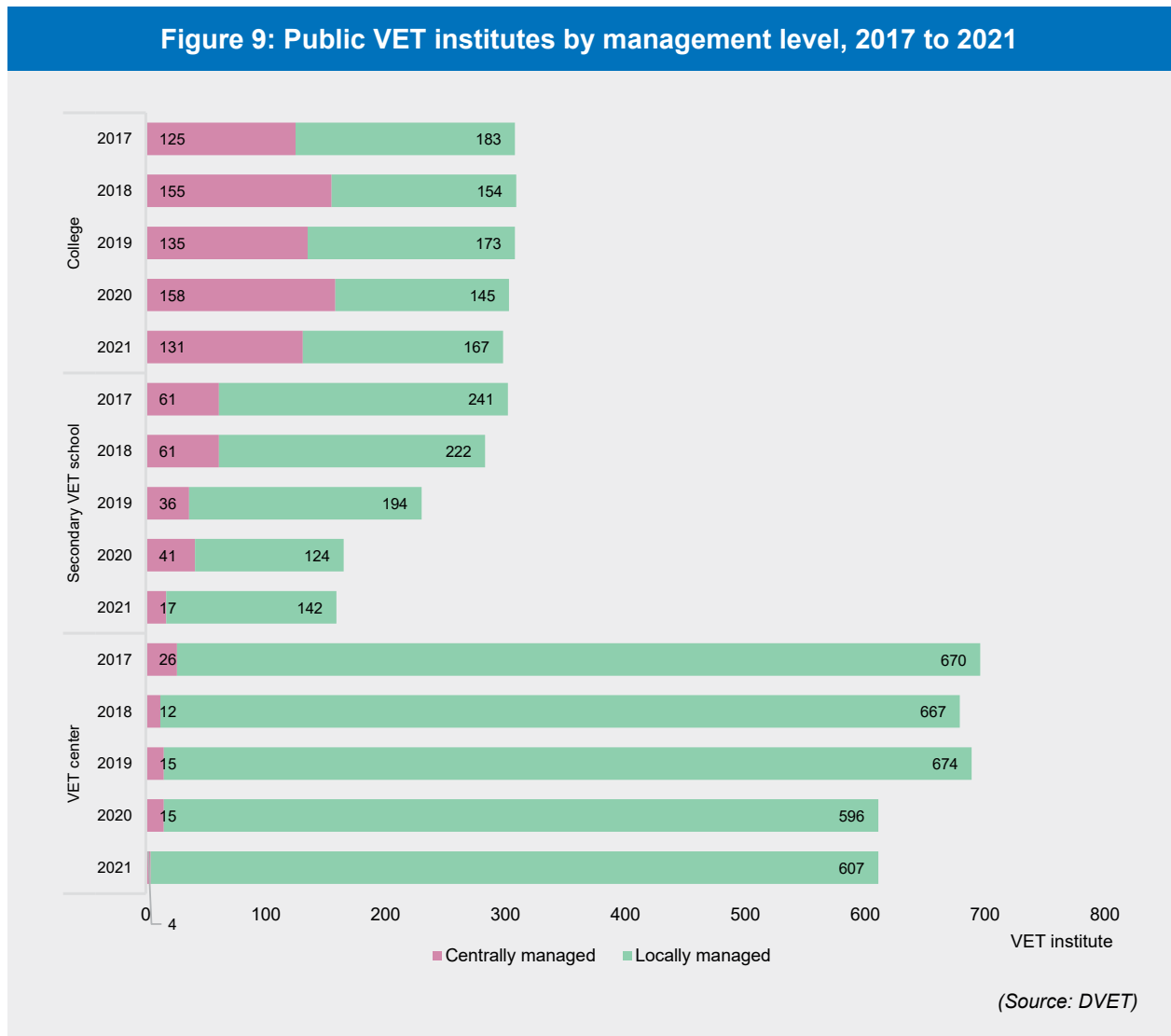


(Source: DVET)

With the aim to retain only one focal public VET provider per province, the VET network restructuring process focused strongly on reducing the overlap between central and local management of VET institutes located in the same geographical areas. In 2021, the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) was the first to transfer two colleges under its management to a provincial government (Phu Tho province). The mechanism for this transfer was formulated by DVET and could serve as a model for subsequent transfers of VET institutes from ministries to local governments. On the other hand, the restructuring of VET institutes within individual

provincial governments and ministries was much slower than in 2020. Only four provinces carried out the merger of VET institutes under their management in 2021, against nine provinces and two ministries in 2020.

By the end of 2021, 14.2% of public VET institutes were under central management, down from 16.2% in 2017. The figures for colleges, secondary VET schools and VET centres were 44%, 10.7% and 0.7% respectively. The shift from central management to local management had been particularly consistent among secondary VET schools and VET centres (figure 3.5).





# CHAPTER 4

## VET ADMISSIONS AND GRADUATIONS

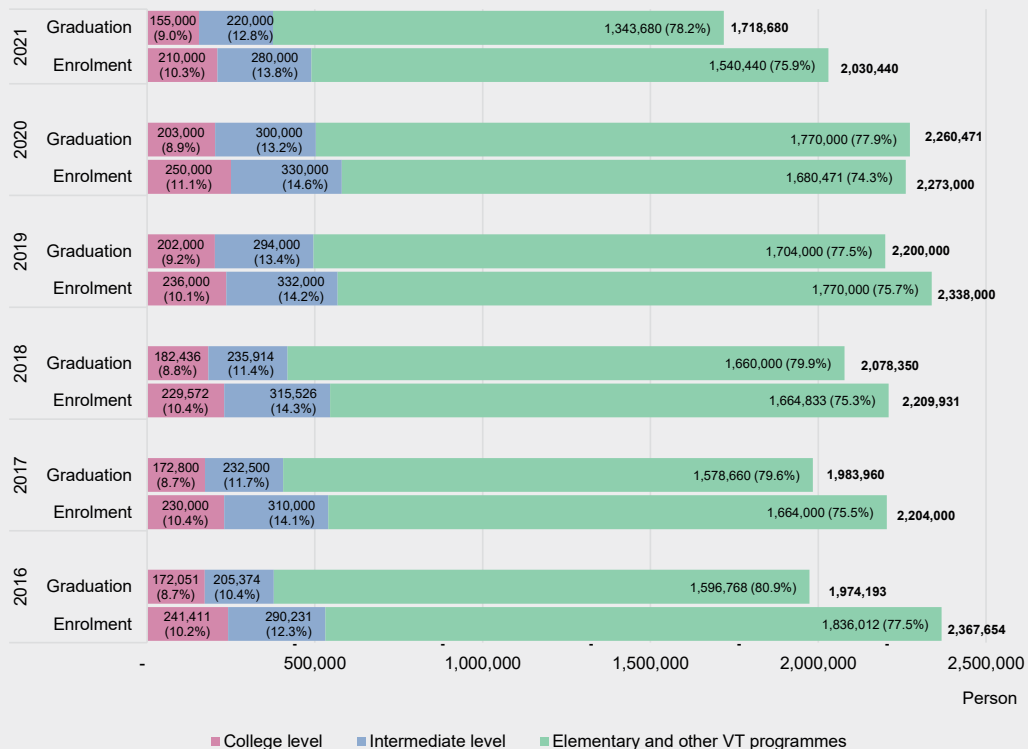
2021 was an unusually difficult year for the VET sector. Due to the Covid pandemic, VET admissions, delivery and examinations were carried out online for the most part. For the first time ever, the sector failed to meet its annual admissions targets. The number of VET graduates was remarkably low, hinting at a high dropout rate.

### 4.1 VET admissions & graduations

A total of 2,030,440 learners enrolled in VET in 2021, 10% less than in 2020 and 13% less than in 2019. This enrolment figure represented about 85% of the set target for 2021. Elementary and other vocational training programmes continued to account for the majority (75.9%) of enrolments. Intermediate and college programmes made up respectively 13.8% and 10.3% of the total national admission number (figure 4.1).

Over 1.7 million learners graduated from VET programmes in 2021, 24.4% less than 2020 and 21.9% less than 2019. Annual graduation numbers had always been lower than enrolments since 2017 with 2020 being the only exception. However, the gap between graduations and enrolments in 2021 was unusually high, which may hint at a significant number of dropouts during Covid (figure 4.1).

**Figure 10: VET admissions and graduations, 2016 to 2021**



(Source: DVET)

In terms of policy development, the issuance of circular 05/2021/TT-BLDTBXH<sup>11</sup> provided an important policy measure to improve permeability between general education and VET, and thus enhance enrolments in VET. Building on previous legal provisions allowing VET students to pursue high school education at VET institutes, circular

05/2021/TT-BLDTBXH stipulates that school leavers having completed the required body of high school knowledge are eligible for college programmes. This new regulation opened another, more accessible pathway to college besides the traditional high school diploma earned through national high school graduation exams.

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<sup>11</sup> Circular 05/2021/TT-BLDTBXH issued by MoLISA on July 7th, 2021 regulating enrolment requirements and enrolment quotas for intermediate and college-level programmes

## CHAPTER 5

# VET TEACHERS

2021 was a particularly challenging year for VET personnel. The shift to online training required a new set of skills that VET teachers had to develop quickly while further and in-service training could not take place due to Covid.

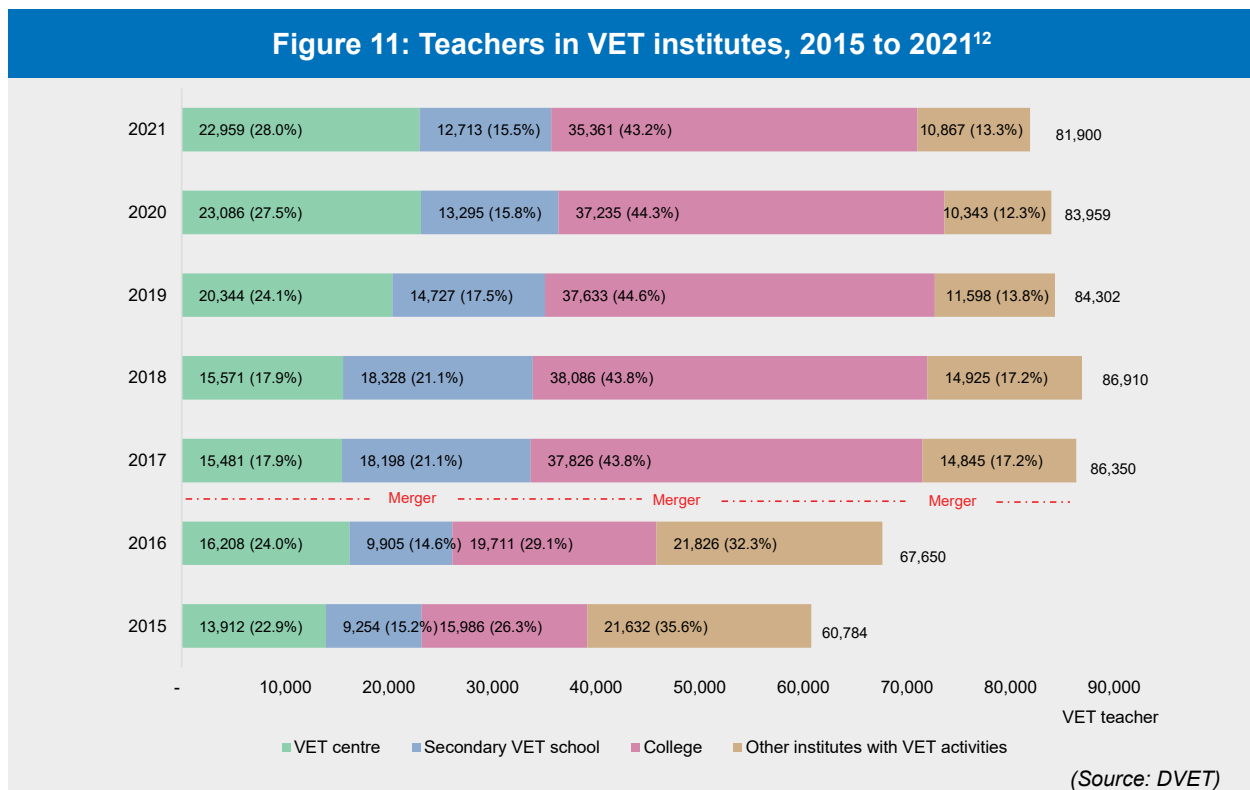
### 5.1 VET teachers

The number of VET teachers kept declining quite steadily between 2019 and 2021. By December 2021, there was a total of 81,900 VET teachers nationwide, 2.5% (2,059 persons) less than in 2020 and 2.9% (2,402 persons) less than in 2019. Secondary VET schools and colleges experienced a continuous downward trend resulting in respectively 13.7% (2,014 persons) and 6.2% (2,317 persons) less teachers over this two-year period. The number of teachers in VET centres fluctuated but remained 12.9% (2,615 persons) higher in 2021 than 2019. Other

institutes with VET activities also experienced fluctuations but ended 2021 with 6.2% less (722 persons) than 2019.

By the end of 2021, 43.1% of VET teachers (35,316 persons) were working in colleges, 15.5% (12,713 persons) in secondary VET schools, 28.0% (22,959 persons) in VET centres and 13.3% (10,867 persons) in other institutes with VET activities (figure 5.1). 50.16% of VET teachers (41,079 persons) were permanent employees and 49.84% (40,821 persons) were contractual employees with contract durations of one year and above.

Figure 11: Teachers in VET institutes, 2015 to 2021<sup>12</sup>



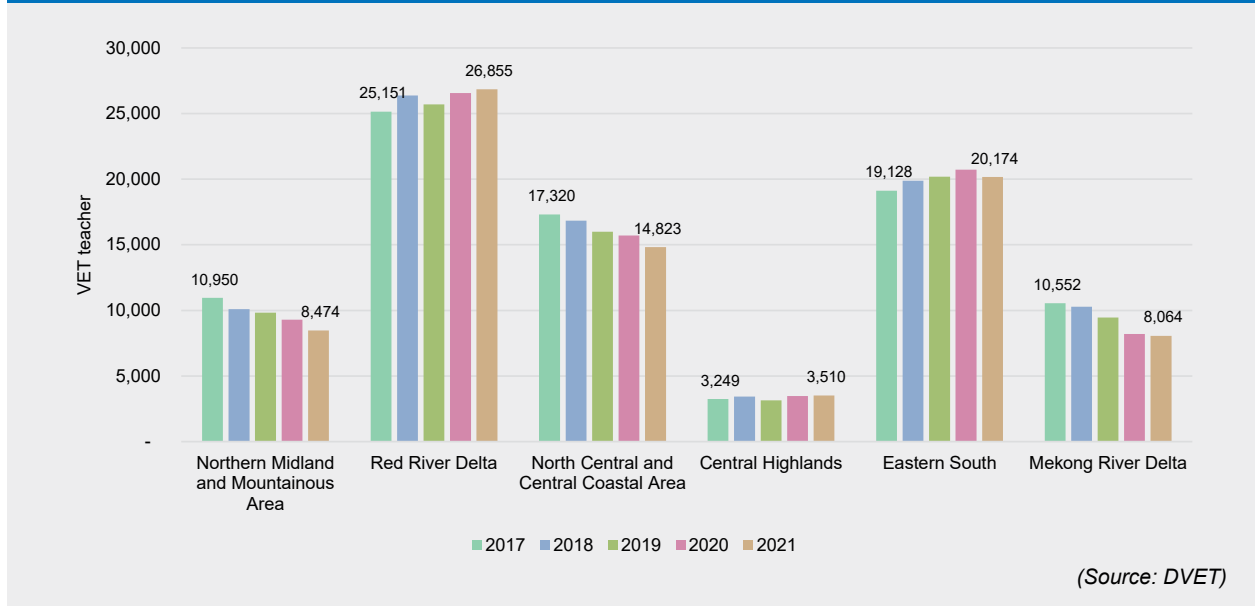
<sup>12</sup> The "Merger" line in the chart indicates the merger of two streams of VET i.e. institutes governed by MoET and those governed by MoLISA into a unified system governed by MoLISA.

### 5.2 Distribution of VET teachers by socio-economic region

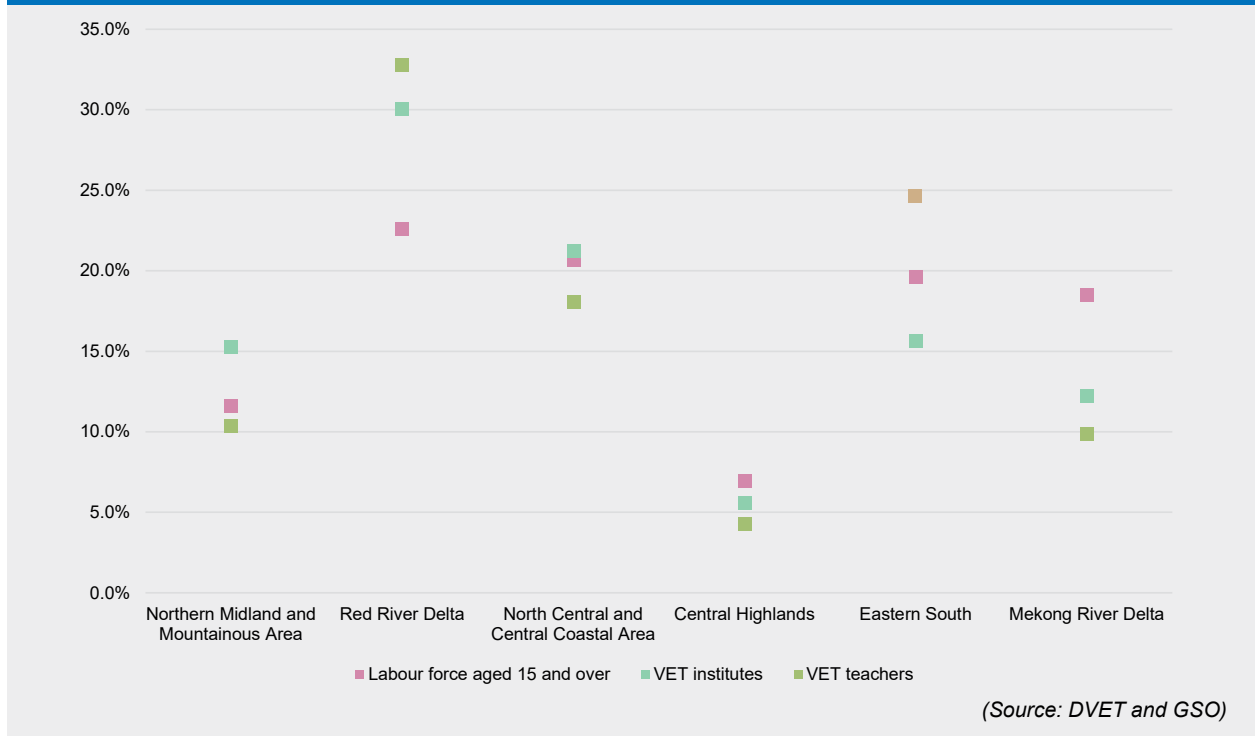
The number of VET teachers had been declining steadily from 2017 to 2021 in the three regions of Northern Midland and Mountainous Areas, North Central and Central Coastal Area

Coastal Area and the Mekong River Delta (figure 5.2). Most notably, the Mekong River Delta has relatively small shares of both VET teachers and VET institutes in comparison to its share of the country’s labour force at age 15 and above (figure 5.3).

**Figure 12: Distribution of VET teachers by socio-economic region, 2017 to 2021**



**Figure 13: Shares in country’s labour force at age 15 and above, VET institutes and VET teachers by socio-economic region (2021)**

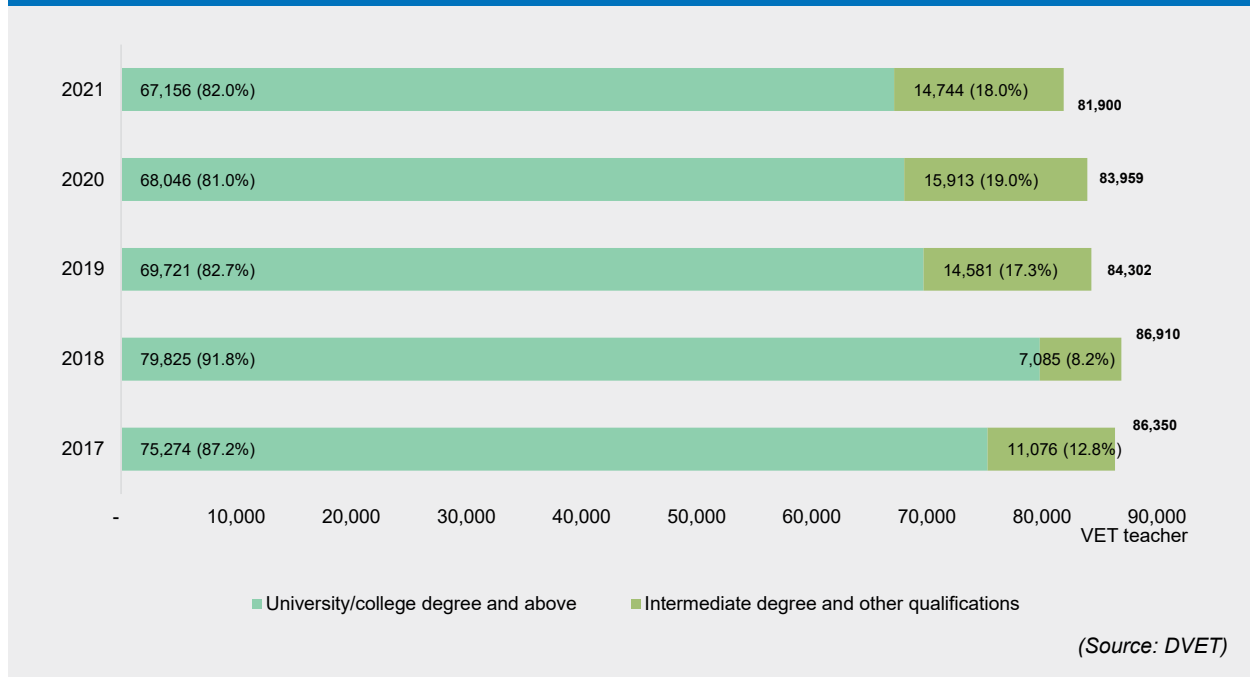


### 5.3 Quality of VET teachers

By December 2021, 100% of VET teachers were found to have adequate academic qualifications. Specifically, 28.8% (23,591 persons) have a master's degree or above,

53.2% (43,565 persons) have a university/college degree, 14.5% (11,886 persons) have an intermediate-level degree, and 3.5% (2,858 persons) are with other qualifications (figure 5.4).

**Figure 14: VET teachers by academic qualification level, 2017 to 2021**



In 2021, teachers' assessments against the required professional standards were not carried out due to Covid-19. The most recent data were from 2020, when about 70% of VET teachers were found to have met the required occupational skills standards to teach practical subjects<sup>13</sup>, and about 50% of teachers working in colleges and secondary VET schools were qualified to teach integrated subjects<sup>14</sup>.

Professional and pedagogical training aimed at bringing VET teachers' qualifications up to the regulated standards almost came to a complete halt in 2021. As a rapid response to Covid-19, DVET cooperated with the GIZ Programme 'Reform of TVET in Viet Nam II' to offer 10 online training courses on 'digital teaching capacity' for 220 teachers and in-company trainers in 2021.

<sup>13</sup> MoLISA (2017) Circular 08/2017/TT-BLDTBXH regulating professional and occupational standards for VET teachers

<sup>14</sup> NIVT (2021) Viet Nam Vocational Education and Training Report 2020, Thanh Nien Publishing House

## CHAPTER 6

# NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL SKILL STANDARDS, ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION OF NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS

Due to Covid-19 and budget constraints, ministries did not carry out the development of national occupational skill standards (NOSS) and no new NOS tests were built in 2021. By the end of the year, a total of 199 sets of NOSS and 96 sets of NOS tests were available for use. NOS assessments have only been organized up to level three of the five NOSS levels.

### 6.1 National Occupational Skill Standards (NOSS)<sup>15</sup>

As at December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, 199 sets of NOSS were promulgated, of which ten were newly developed and 30 updated in accordance with circular 56/2015/TT-BLDTBXH. The remaining

159 sets of NOSS established in compliance with the 2006 Vocational Training Law and Decision 09/2008/QĐ-BLDTBXH<sup>16</sup> had become outdated and will need to be revised (figure 6.1). No new NOSS were developed in 2021 due to the impacts of Covid-19 and the unavailability of funding from ministries.

**Figure 15: Number of NOSS promulgated and updated by sector, 2021**



<sup>15</sup> The development and promulgation of NOSS is regulated by the provisions of Clause 2, Article 32 of the 2013 Employment Law i.e., Law No. 38/2013/QH13. The implementation of these provisions is regulated by Circular 56/2015/TT-BLDTBXH issued by MoLISA on December 24, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> MoLISA (2008) Decision 09/2008/QĐ-BLDTBXH prescribing the development, appraisal and promulgation of national occupational skill standards issued on March 27, 2008

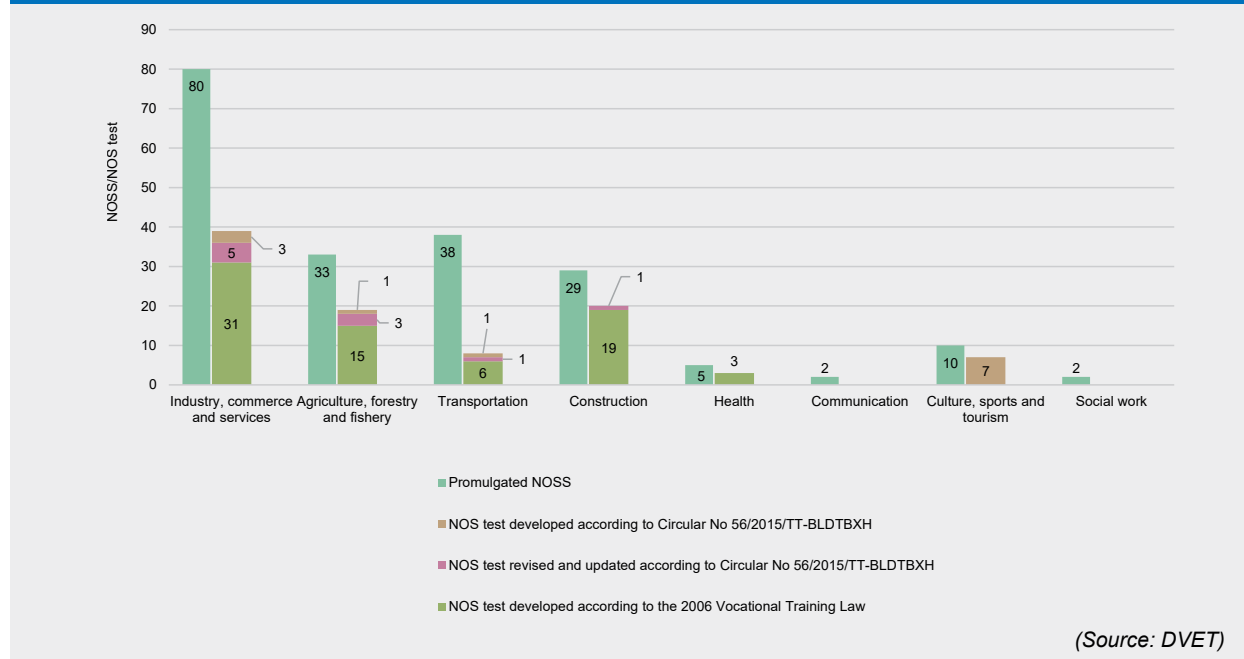
## 6.2 NOS assessment and certification

### 6.2.1 Development of NOS assessment tests

Due to Covid-19 and budget constraints, no new NOS assessment tests were developed in

2021. By the end of the year, NOS assessment tests were available for 96 occupations, of which twelve tests were newly developed and ten updated in compliance with the 2013 Employment Law<sup>17</sup> (figure 6.2).

Figure 16: Number of NOS tests complied by sector, 2021



### 6.2.2 NOS assessment agencies<sup>18</sup>

In 2021, new licenses were granted to three NOS assessment agencies i.e., Da Nang Tourism College, Nha Trang Tourism College, and Cao Thang Technical College while four other agencies had their licenses upgraded to allow for the assessment of additional occupations. By the end of 2021, there was a total of 52 licensed agencies, all of which were located within universities, colleges, and secondary VET schools. No companies have applied for NOS assessment licenses yet. Very few NOS assessment agencies were licensed

to perform assessments at levels four and five, and there is no record of these assessments ever being organized.

### 6.2.3 Training and certification of NOS assessors<sup>19</sup>

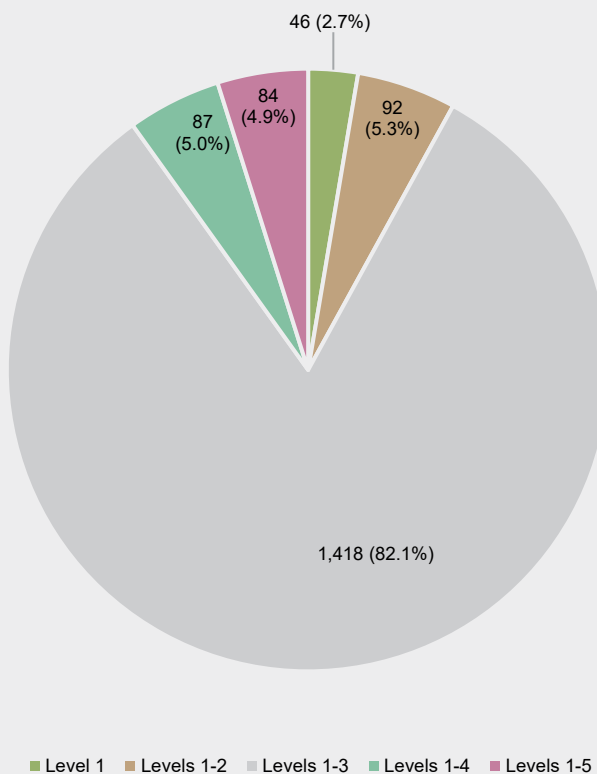
In 2021, the training and certification of NOS assessors did not take place. By the end of the year, there was a total of 1,743 certified NOS assessors working in 50 occupations. The significant majority of assessors (82%) were licensed to perform assessments up to level 3 (figure 6.3).

<sup>17</sup> 2021 data are more updated than those presented in 2020 Vietnam VET Report.

<sup>18</sup> The licensing of NOS assessment agencies is regulated primarily by Decree 31/2015/ND-CP issued on March 24, 2015 by the Government regulating the implementation of several articles of the Employment Law in relation to NOS assessment and certification and Decree 140/2018/ND-CP issued on October 08, 2018 specifying the amendments and additions to Decrees pertaining to business investment conditions and administrative procedures under MoLISA's state management.

<sup>19</sup> The certification of NOS assessors is regulated by Circular 19/2016/TT-BLDTBXH issued by MoLISA on June 28, 2016, guiding the implementation of some articles of Decree 31/2015/ND-CP.

**Figure 17: Number of NOS assessors certified for level 1-5 assessments (2021)**



(Source: DVET)

#### 6.2.4 NOS assessment and certification

The NOS framework consists of five skills levels against which workers can be assessed<sup>20</sup>. However, assessments have been made available up to level three only. NOS certificates are mandatory for hazardous jobs mainly in the mining, construction and healthcare sectors<sup>21</sup>.

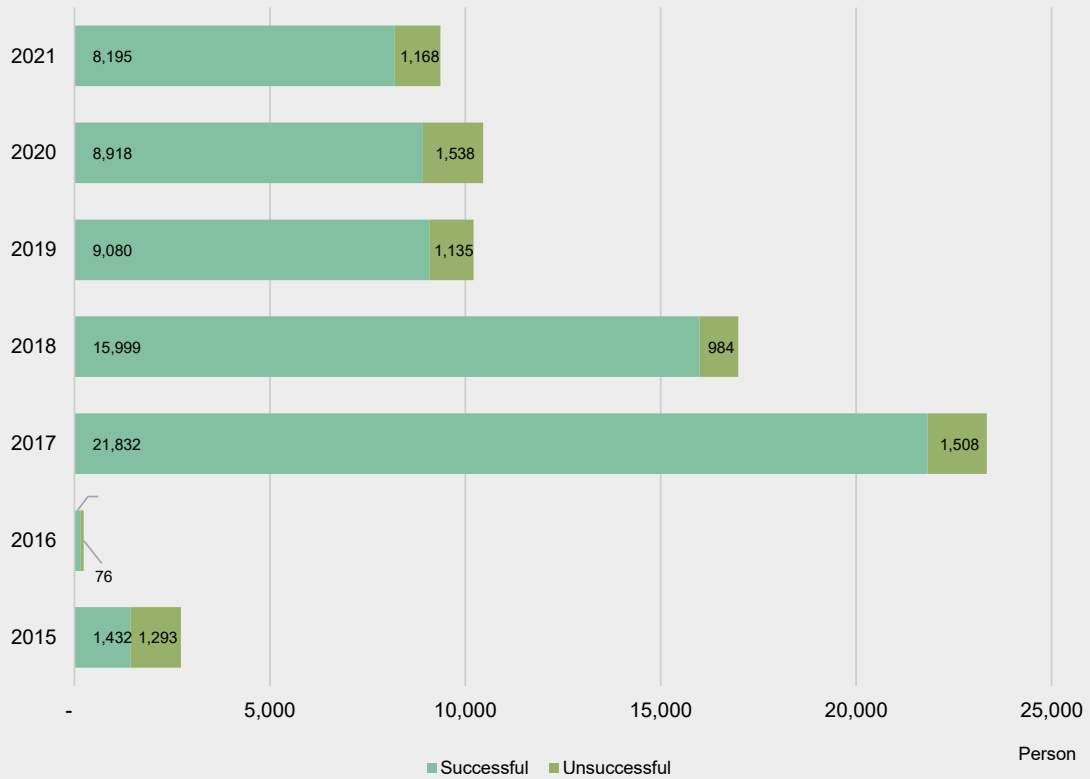
The number of workers taking part in NOS assessments had been declining quite consistently since 2017, with only a slight year-over-year increase in 2020. In 2021, a total of 9,363 workers underwent NOS assessments, 10.5% less than 2020 and 8.3% less than 2019. 87.5% of NOS test takers (8,195 persons) were given certificates of positive assessment results in 2021 (figure 6.4).

<sup>20</sup> Detailed descriptions of each NOS level can be found in Circular 56/2015/TT-BLDTBXH while the conditions for participation in NOS assessment and certification can be found in Decree 31/2015/ND-CP.

<sup>21</sup> Decree 31/2015/ND-CP issued by the Government on March 24, 2015 regulating the execution of provisions of the Employment Law on NOS assessment and certification



Figure 18: Participation in NOS assessments, 2015 to 2021



(Source: DVET)

## CHAPTER 7

# VET QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION

Despite the impacts of Covid-19, the upward trend of VET institutes, especially colleges undertaking self-evaluations and applying for accreditation continued uninterrupted in 2021. Another important development of the year was the issuance of circular 35/2021/TT-BLDTBXH<sup>22</sup> to regulate the criteria and process for the assessment and recognition of high-quality colleges.

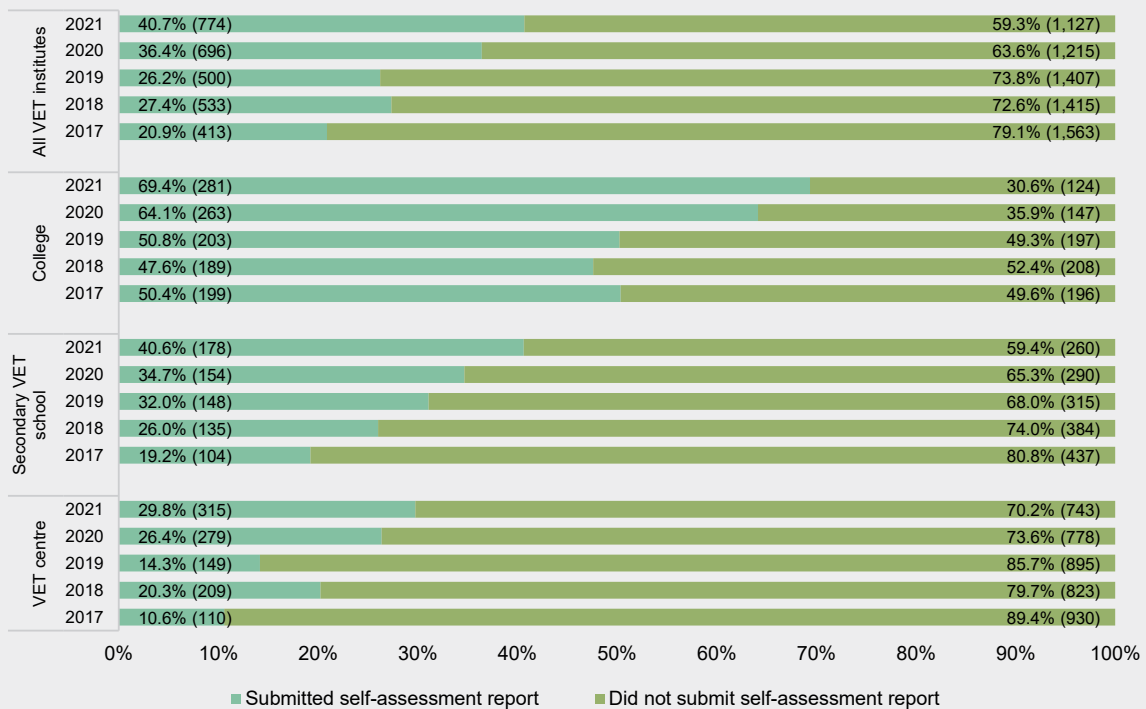
### 7.1 VET accreditation

#### 7.1.1 Self-evaluation of VET quality

The number of VET institutes undertaking self-evaluation of their overall VET quality increased quite steadily across the board since 2017. In 2021, 69.4% of colleges submitted their self-evaluation reports, against 40.6%

of secondary VET schools and 29.8% of VET centres (figure 7.1). 88.1% of the submitted reports (682 institutes) showed satisfactory achievements against the regulated standards. MoLISA's target<sup>23</sup> is for 90% of colleges, 80% of secondary VET schools and 60% of VET centres to submit their annual VET quality self-evaluation reports by 2025.

Figure 19: VET institutes that conducted self-assessment of VET quality, 2017 to 2021



(Source: DVET)

<sup>22</sup> Circular 35/2021/TT-BLDTBXH issued by MoLISA on December 30th, 2021 regulating the criteria and process for the assessment and recognition of high-quality colleges

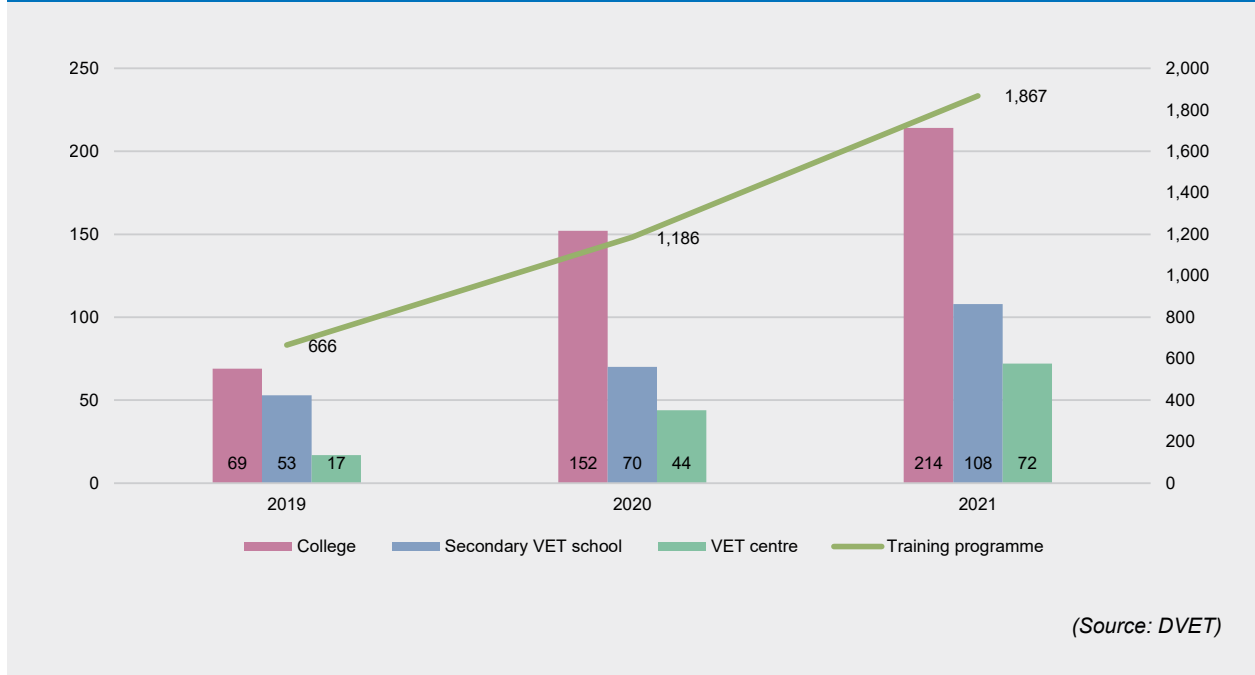
<sup>23</sup> Decision 496/QĐ-LĐTBXH issued by MoLISA on May 5th, 2020 promulgating VET accreditation plan for the 2020 – 2025 period

**7.1.2 Self-evaluation of training programmes**

The number of VET institutes that carried out self-evaluation of their training programmes also increased across the board between 2019 and 2021 (figure 7.2). In 2021, 394 VET institutes (20.77% of country’s total) including

214 colleges, 108 secondary VET schools and 72 VET centres self-evaluated a total of 1,867 training programmes. 94.5% of the self-evaluated programmes were found to have met the regulated standards.

**Figure 20: VET institutes having carried out self-evaluation of their training programmes and total number of self-evaluated training programmes, 2019 to 2021**



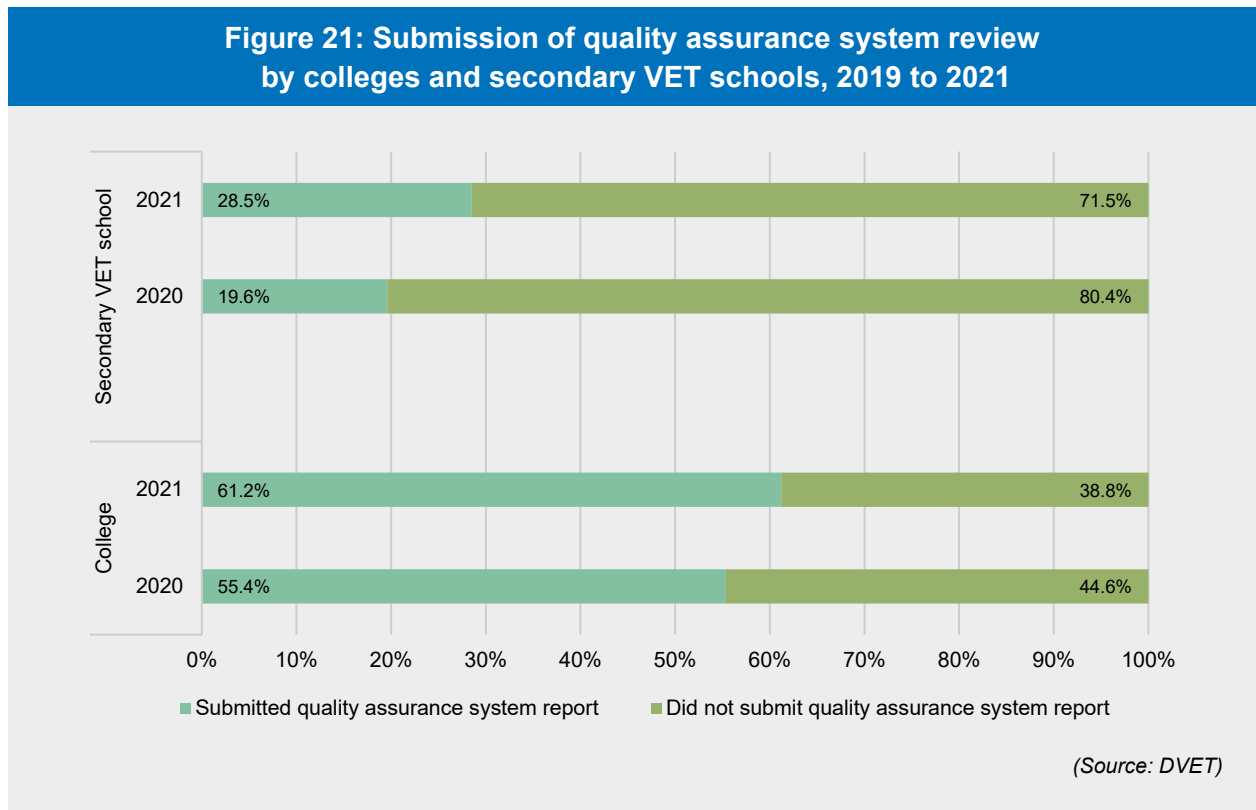
**7.1.3 Accreditation of VET quality and training programmes**

Four independent VET accrediting agencies are operating in Viet Nam since 2019 - 2020. Between 2020 and 2021, a total of 50 VET institutes, including 47 colleges and three secondary VET schools applied for accreditation. All the three secondary VET schools and 46 colleges became accredited, representing a success rate of 98%. Over the same period, 40 training programmes were reviewed and gained accreditation, including one intermediate-level and 39 college-level programmes.

**7.2 Development of quality assurance systems at VET institutes**

Annual reporting on the development and operation of quality assurance systems is compulsory for VET colleges and secondary VET schools, and optional for VET centres<sup>24</sup>. The percentage of VET institutes that submitted their reports jumped from 7.8% (149 institutes) in 2019 to 20.5% (390 institutes) in 2021. Colleges are most likely to review the performance of their quality assurance systems with 61.2% submitting their reports in 2021 (figure 7.3).

<sup>24</sup> MoLISA (2017) Circular 28/2017-TT/BLDTBXH issued on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 regulating quality assurance systems at VET institutes



## CHAPTER 8

# VET FINANCES

State budget continued to be the most important funding source for VET. Nevertheless, VET's share in the total state budget allocation for recurrent expenditures has been declining slowly since 2018. In absolute terms, state budget funding for recurrent expenditures in VET declined by 8.4% in 2021 compared to 2020.

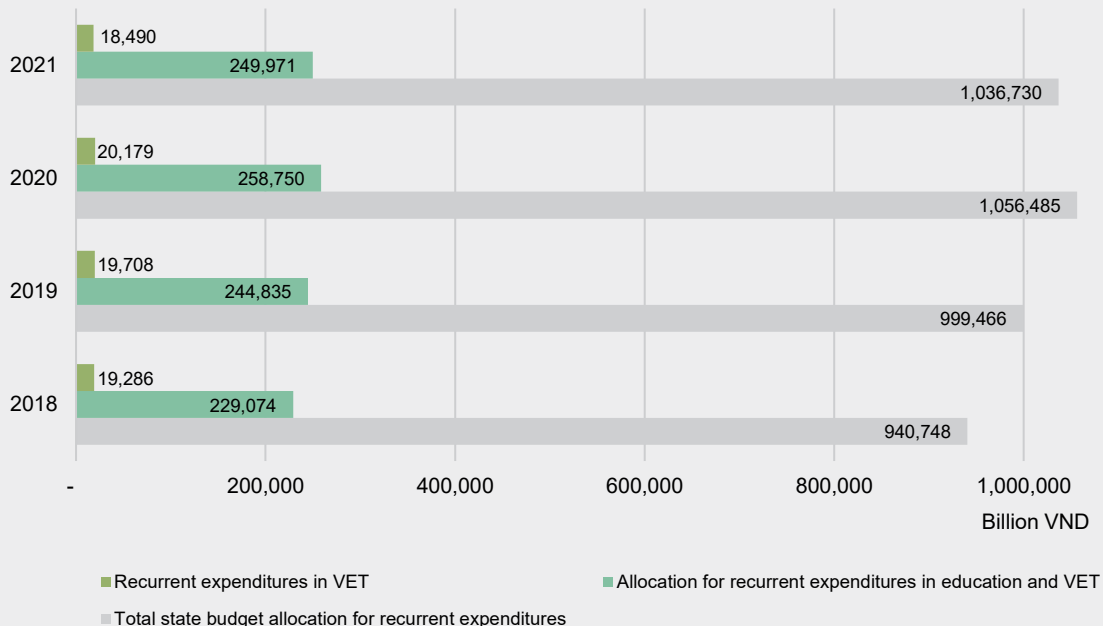
In 2021, three new projects under national target programmes for VET were started and will be implemented over the 2021 – 2025 period.

### 8.1. State budget funding for recurrent expenditures in VET

As regulated by the Law on State Budget, VET does not stand alone but is combined with education as one funding category within the state budget. In 2021, state budget funding for

recurrent expenditures in VET and education stood at VND 249,971 billion (≈USD 10.7 billion), 3.4% less than in 2020. Recurrent expenditures in VET were VND 18,490 billion (≈USD 790 million), 8.4% less than in 2020 (figure 8.1).

Figure 22: Recurrent expenditures for VET, 2018 to 2021

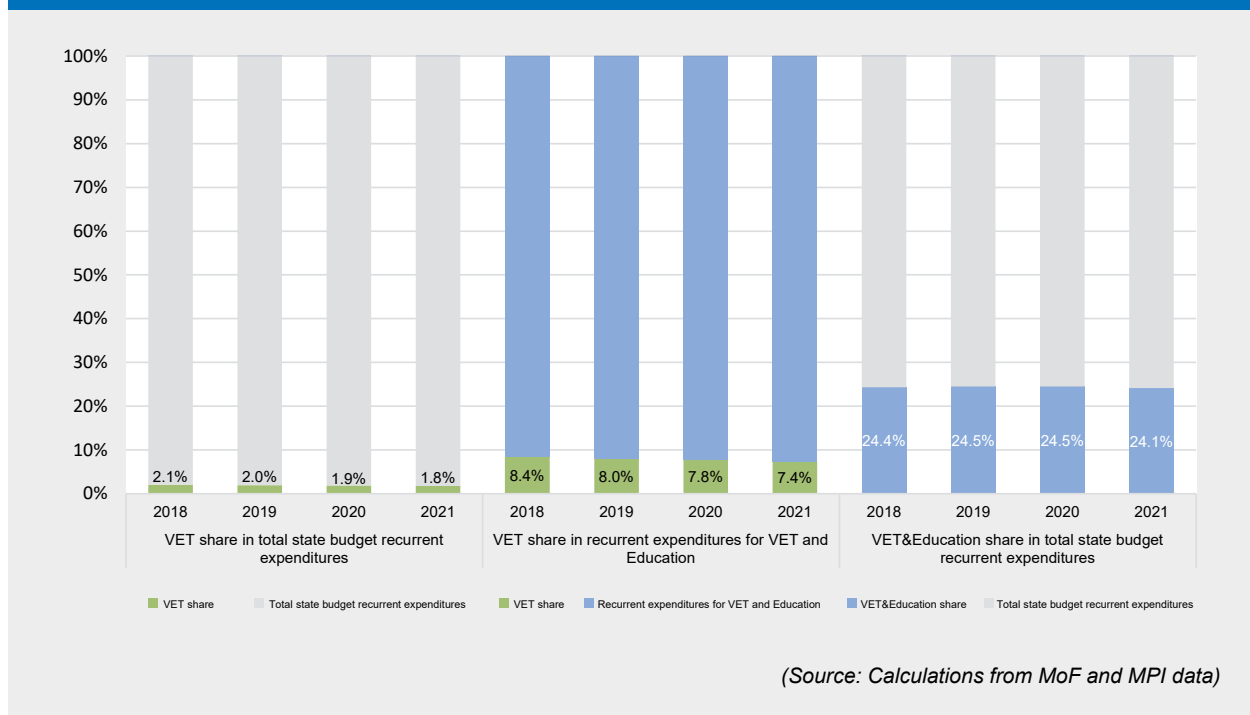


(Source: MoF, MPI)

The share of VET and education has remained consistently at under 25% of the country’s total state budget recurrent expenditures since 2018. Expenditures in VET, in particular, had been declining quite steadily as a share of both the combined funding for VET and education and of the country’s total state

budget recurrent expenditures (figure 8.2). VET accounted for 1.8% of all state budget recurrent expenditures in 2021, down from 2.1% in 2018 and for 7.4% of the combined allocation for VET and education, down from 8.4% in 2018.

**Figure 23: Share of VET in state budget funding for recurrent expenditures, 2018 to 2021**

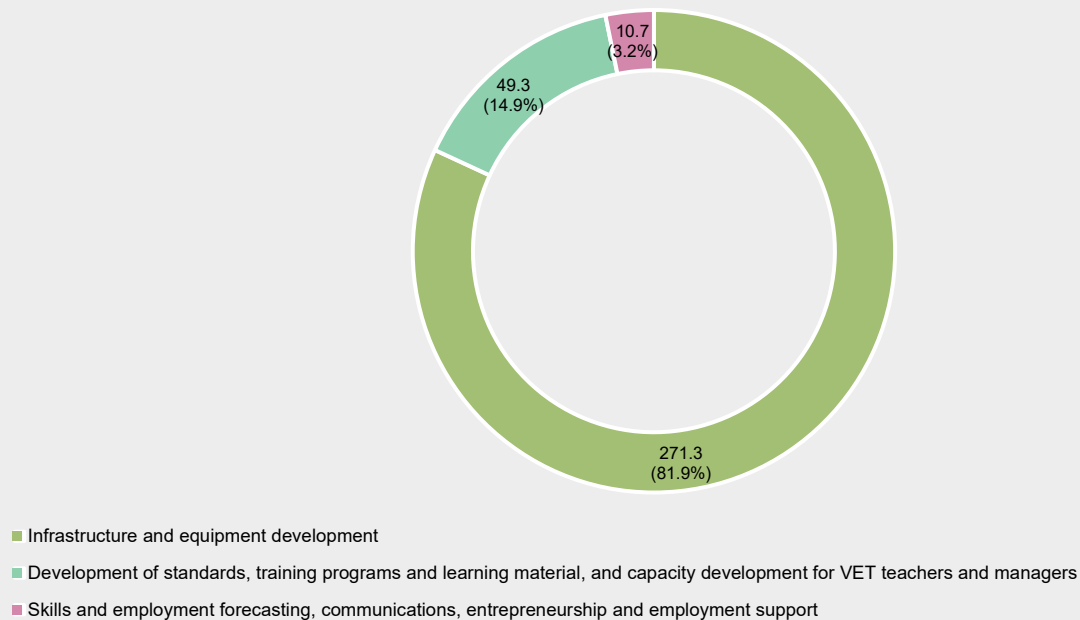


### 8.2 State budget funding for VET target programmes

Three VET projects were approved to be carried out over the period of 2021-2025 under the National Target Programmes. The first project, ‘VET development for poor and disadvantaged areas’, requires an estimated budget of VND 15,300 billion (≈USD 653.8 million). In 2021, the project was allocated VND 331.3 billion (≈USD 14.1 million), which is worth 2.1 % of the total budgeted funding. 81.9% of the disbursed funding was spent on infrastructure and equipment development (figure 8.3). The second project, ‘Development of VET and employment for workers in mountainous and ethnic minority areas’, requires an estimated

budget of VND 12,620.703 (≈USD 539.3 million). No disbursement was made in 2021. The third project - ‘Improvement of VET quality for rural workers’ - belongs to the National Target Programme for New Rural Development, whose structure does not allow for budget allocations to be made directly to its component projects. Instead, the Programme is given a common budget from which allocations are made to ministries and local governments who decide how to spend their financial resources on different programme activities and project components. In 2021, a total of VND 4.0 billion (≈USD 170,940 million) was disbursed to DVET to implement activities aimed at improving VET quality for rural workers.

**Figure 24: Spending items of the project  
‘VET development for poor and disadvantaged areas’, 2021 (in VND billion)**



(Source: DVET)

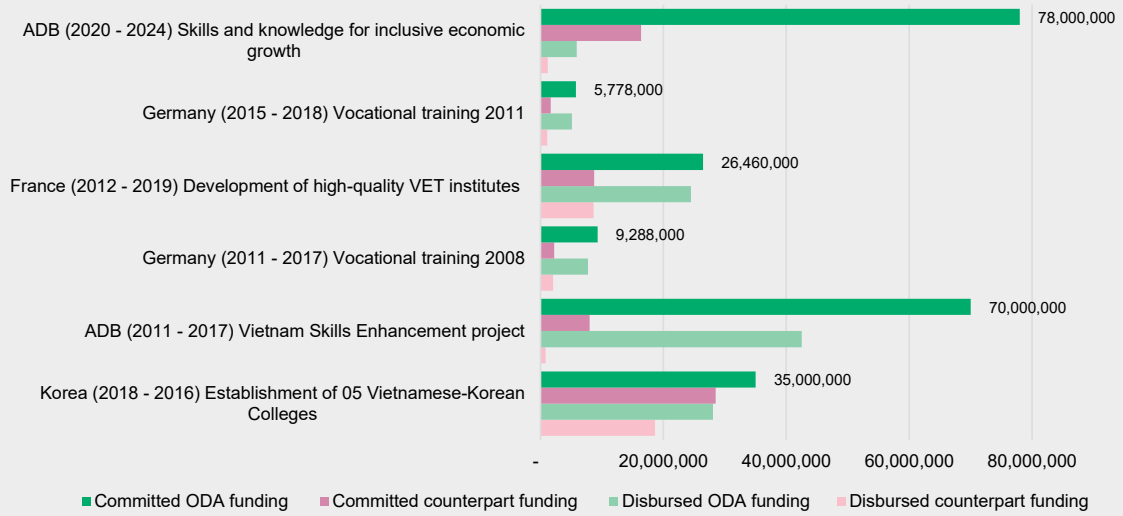
### 8.3 ODA for VET development

Between 2011 and 2021, DVET implemented six ODA projects supported by various countries and international organisations including France, Germany, Korea and the Asian Development Bank. ODA funding was invested primarily in key occupations and VET institutes selected to become high-quality

colleges. By the end of 2021, five projects were completed<sup>25</sup>. The total committed ODA funding for six projects amounted at approximately USD 224 million, of which 50.7% (≈USD 114 million) had been disbursed by the end of 2021. The total committed counterpart funding amounted at approximately USD 65.5 million, of which about 50% (USD 32.5 million) had been disbursed (figure 8.4).

<sup>25</sup> The ADB project “Skills and Knowledge for Inclusive Economic Growth” was still underway in 2021.

Figure 25: ODA funding for VET, 2016 to 2021



(Source: DVET)



## APPENDIX

### Appendix 1: List of key normative documents and guiding policies on vocational education and training issued in 2021

No	Code	Date of issuance	Type of document	Name of document	Issuing authority
1	01/NQ-CP	01/01/2021	Resolution	Major tasks and solutions for the implementation of the 2019 socio-economic development plan and state budget estimate	The Government
2	23/2021/NĐ-CP	19/03/2021	Decree	Elaboration of Clause 3 of Article 37 on employment service centres and Article 39 on enterprises providing employment services of the Employment Law	The Government
3	Decision No.17/2021/QĐ-TTg	31/03/2021	Decision	Regulations on the level of vocational training support to workers covered by unemployment insurance	MoLISA
4	60/2021/NĐ-CP	21/06/2021	Decree	Regulations on financial autonomy mechanism for public non-business units	The Government
5	05/2021/TT-BLĐTBX	07/07/2021	Circular	Regulations on enrolment procedures and quotas for intermediate and college-level programmes	MoLISA
6	1260/QĐ-TTg	19/07/2021	Decision	Approval of the programme “Strengthening of legal education and legal awareness-raising at VET institutes for the 2021 – 2027 period”	The Government
7	24/2021/QH15	28/07/2021	Decision	Approval of investment policy for the National Target Programme for Sustainable Poverty Reduction for the 2021-2025 period	National Assembly
8	10/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	10/09/2021	Circular	Promulgation of 116 economic-technical norms for intermediate and college level training programmes	MoLISA
9	16/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	08/11/2021	Circular	Promulgation of the index of minimum training equipment applicable to 98 intermediate and college level training programmes	MoLISA
10	2222/QĐ-TTg	30/12/2021	Decision	Approval of the programme “digital transformation in VET to 2025 with a vision to 2030”	The Government
11	2239/QĐ-TTg	30/12/2021	Decision	Approval of the VET development strategy for 2021-2030, with a vision to 2045	The Prime Minister
12	34/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	30/12/2021	Circular	Amendment to articles of Circular No. 27/2018/TT-BLĐTBXH issued by MoLISA on 25/12/2018 regulating the assessment and certification of VET quality accreditors, and VET quality accreditation process and cycle	MoLISA
13	35/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	30/12/2021	Circular	Regulations on the criteria and process for the assessment and recognition of high quality colleges	MoLISA
14	32/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	28/12/2021	Circular	Regulations on the integration of additional knowledge and skills for VET students	MoLISA
15	14/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	21/10/2021	Circular	Regulations on secondary VET school Charters	MoLISA
16	15/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH	21/10/2021	Circular	Regulations on College Charters	MoLISA

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8. MoLISA (2016), Circular 46/2016/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on December 28th, 2016: Regulations on college charters
9. MoLISA (2016), Circular 47/2016/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on December 28th, 2016: Regulations on secondary VET school charters
10. MoLISA (2017), Circular 08/2017/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on October 3rd, 2017: Regulations on professional and occupational standards for VET teachers
11. MoLISA (2017), Circular 28/2017-TT/BLĐTBXH issued on December 15th, 2017: Regulations on quality assurance systems at VET institutes
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13. MoLISA (2021), Circular 05/2021/TT-BLĐTBXH issued on July 7th, 2021: Regulations on enrolment procedures and quotas for intermediate and college-level programmes

14. MoLISA (2021), Circular 35/2021/TT-BLDTBXH issued on December 30th, 2021: Regulations on the criteria and process for the assessment and recognition of high-quality colleges
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