



## Country Brief – Vietnam

### Update

2012 was another challenging year for Vietnam's economy. Though inflation was kept to 9.2%, GDP growth declined to 5.03% (lower than the government's target) and foreign investment declined by 15%. 2012 saw the closure of many small and medium businesses, increasing debt for many enterprises, and declining production capability. Many families reduced discretionary spending to maintain saving levels (to be used for education).

In the past year Vietnam increased regulation and enforcement in the education sector:

- The first Law on Higher Education (2012) took effect in January 2013, aiming to support reform of HE in Vietnam and covering issues not previously included in legislation e.g. institutional autonomy and accountability; quality assurance; universities' roles in research; science and technology; private universities; national and regional universities; and university classification and ranking. Higher education institutions, ministries and agencies must also comply with the Law on Education (2005) and relevant investment laws
- Decree 73 (2012), under the Investment Law (2005), took effect in November 2012. Decree 73 replaces Decree 06, and applies to foreign investment and cooperation projects in education and vocational training in Vietnam, including kindergartens, schools, and tertiary institutions, twinning programs, and representative offices of foreign education institutions
- Overview of the legal framework affecting foreign education and Comments on Vietnam's Law on Higher Education are available at <https://aei.gov.au/international-network/vietnam/publications/pages/publications.aspx>
- MOET increased checking compliance against regulations for in-country delivery of foreign programs. Some international partners were found to have entered into partnerships exceeding the licences of local providers. Licences were withdrawn from several local partners delivering education services. MOET has further plans to assess the quality of courses delivered through foreign partnerships
- In January 2013, MOET introduced circular regulating agents who provide advice on overseas education (eg certification by MOET, responsibilities).

### Vietnamese Government initiatives:

- 2020 Foreign Languages Project: graduates should be able communicate in English at work
- Government scholarships (911 program) to train 20,000 lecturers to PhD level by 2020
- Building four international standard universities: Hanoi (Vietnam - French University), HCMC (Vietnam – German University), Da Nang and Can Tho
- Development of VET system to provide 90% of workers (approx. 25 million people) with skills by 2020, including Skills Enhancement Project: funded by ADB (2011-2015).

## Looking ahead

2013 marks the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and Vietnam. Education is one of the longest-standing elements in the relationship and will be highlighted during the year. Australia has hosted 40,000 students in the 40 years of diplomatic relations. Established through scholarships, the education relationship is now multi-faceted and steadily maturing. Priorities for education policy engagement include quality assurance, vocational education reform and university research collaboration.

- Questacon tour to Vietnam for 3-weeks in April to showcase Australia as a world-leader in science education and innovation. Production of a bilingual book on producing experiments using low-cost materials will assist Vietnam's goal to teach science in English
- Vietnam–Australia Forum on Teaching English at University: co-organised by MOET and University English Centres Australia
- Endeavour Awards promotion in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (opening 1 April 2013)
- 3rd Australia – Vietnam Joint Working Group on Education & Training: in Canberra in late 2013 will set priorities for education and training engage policy engagement and seek to resolve any concerns in the education relationship
- Alumni conference: in Hanoi in late 2013 will bring together Vietnamese alumni of Australian universities and Australian academics to identify areas for future collaboration
- Academic conference: The fifth Engaging with Vietnam Conference (Hanoi, December 2013), bringing together scholars, researchers, policy makers in a forum to disseminate research
- Australia–Vietnam Agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation: will facilitate increased scientific research partnerships, particularly to address shared challenges in agriculture, medicine, climate change and food security. There is growing international competition for leading Vietnamese researchers.

## Counsellor contact details

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