

# DUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM OF GERMANY AND LESSONS LEARNT FOR VIETNAM

## ARTICLE 1: GERMAN DUAL VET SYSTEM

*Phạm Thị Minh Hiền, Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Agency*

*Study trip "The dual system of vocational training in Germany" from September 16-22 in Bonn, Berlin and Potsdam*

*Updated on: 04/03/2019*

Source: <http://qdn.gov.vn/AIAdmin/News/View/tabid/66/newsid/37108/seo/He-thong-dao-tao-nghe-kep-cua-CHLB-Duc-va-gia-tri-tham-khao-voi-Viet-Nam-Bai-1-He-thong-dao-tao-nghe-kep-cua-CHLB-Duc-/Default.aspx#1>

Concerning the labour force, **Dual Vocational Education and Training (Dual VET) system** is the key to success of the German economy. The following article provides an overview of the German dual VET system and its operation, including contents of training programmes, training implementation, teachers and trainers, training standards and examination for dual VET certificate.

### **1. Overview of the German dual VET system:**

In this system, on average, training on company premises accounts for 70% of the training period and the remaining 30% takes place at vocational schools. Because of the two coordinated learning venues, this system is called "dual". It should be noted that after general education (10-13 school years), in Germany, learners have 3 options before entering the labour market: (i) dual VET system, (ii) Full time vocational schools [1] or (iii) higher education. Thus, dual VET is only one of the two vocational training models in Germany. This also explains why a German vocational school has both dual-VET trainees and full-time trainees.

According to the data from the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in 2018, about 52% of the population at the age of 16-24 enters Dual VET. They receive an average training allowance of 876 Eur per month by the employers. The scale of dual VET is about 1.32 million trainees per year with the average age at 19.4 years old. According to 2016 data, among the total number of new trainees (or 520,332 new training contracts that employers sign with dual VET trainees), 58.5% are in the manufacturing industry, 27.2% are in the craft sector, the rest are in agriculture, public services and freelance sector.

Currently, about 20% of companies participate in dual VET. On average 95% of graduates are employed, of which about 68% continue to work for their training company. Employers invest on average 18,000 Eur per apprentice per year, but about two thirds of the total cost will be refinanced by trainees' contribution during the training period. With such scale and the efficiency, dual VET is considered a key pillar of the German VET system.



*Representatives from BIBB present the Dual VET System to representatives from 16 countries attending the Study Tour in Germany from 16-22/09/2018.*

## **2. How dual VET works:**

### **- Provide in-company training and vocational school education:**

#### **+ In-company training:**

In-company training must comply with the regulations issued by the Federal Government. Companies follow procedures to register with the local Chamber of Commerce [2] to be granted with a training license. Trainees who want to acquire vocational skills through dual VET often actively seek information and apply for training places at companies. It should be noted that trainees must register with companies instead of vocational schools, although about 30% of the time at vocational schools is compulsory. The companies assess the trainees' profile and the capacity, to see if they meet the requirements to sign a training contract. The contract between the two parties is a legal basis for adjusting the contract implementation process of the companies. The content of a training contract is similar to a work contract that regulates: duration of training, beginning and end of training, probation time, vacations, content of training, training allowance and termination of contract. Companies are obliged to provide training under real-life working conditions (in-company trainers, modern equipment...) and pay training allowances for trainees on the basis of agreement between the two parties, and some other expenses.

In-company training mainly includes practical skills at work and must comply with training standards in the companies. Full-time in-company trainers must have a master craftsman degree, which is managed and controlled by the Chamber of Commerce. Part-time trainers do not need any formal certificate, as long as they are skilled employees from the company. The Chambers of commerce are responsible for assessing and certifying in-company trainers.

*+ Vocational school education:*

Unlike in-company training regulated by the Federal Government, vocational school education is regulated by each state's government [3]. State governments invest and pay the full cost of vocational school education. Monitoring of vocational training including quality assessment is conducted by the school inspection agency - under each state government.

The content of dual VET is based on the framework curriculum, which includes general subjects for specialised occupations and specialised job-related theories to support the in-company training, other subjects such as soft skills, foreign languages, physical education...

VET teachers include teachers of general subjects, job-related theories and practical subjects. VET teachers are required to have a Master degree equivalent to level 7 in the National Qualification Framework. VET teachers are trained in 2 phases: university education (from 4.5 - 5 years, including practice at a vocational school and a company) and the probationary period lasts from 1 to 2 year to observe the class and supervise teaching. Trainees must pass the state exams to graduate from each phase.

**- Training standard:**

Training standards in dual VET include in-company training standards (training regulations) and framework curriculum in vocational schools. In – company training standards are issued by a Federal Ministry, which is usually the Federal Ministry of Industry and Energy (BMWi), after the consensus with the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. There have been training standards for 328 occupations in dual VET system. The content includes: (i) name of training (ii) duration of training (iii) describe knowledge, skills and competencies to be achieved for that occupations, (iv) instruct the training plan, structure of the content and training schedule (v) assessments needed to meet training requirements.

In-company training programmes and plans need to be concordant with the curriculum framework at vocational schools so that the training contents in two places are suitable and complementary. Each state government also develops or updates training curricula at vocational schools based on the in-company training standards.

Notably, the process of building and updating dual VET standards should usually last less than a year to be able to catch up with economic development and rapid technological changes. Companies actively determine and propose necessary new training contents at the workplace. Based on these proposals, BIBB, which is a research agency of the Federal Government will coordinate with experts from each industry and occupational field (proposed by the industry/employers) and trade unions to develop in-company training standards. BIBB also researches and publishes documents guiding the implementation of in-company training standards such as: explaining the learning objectives in the general training plan, instructing teachers, examiners and assessing students, training results, exam structure, how to design training plans and templates...

***- Final examination and training qualification:***

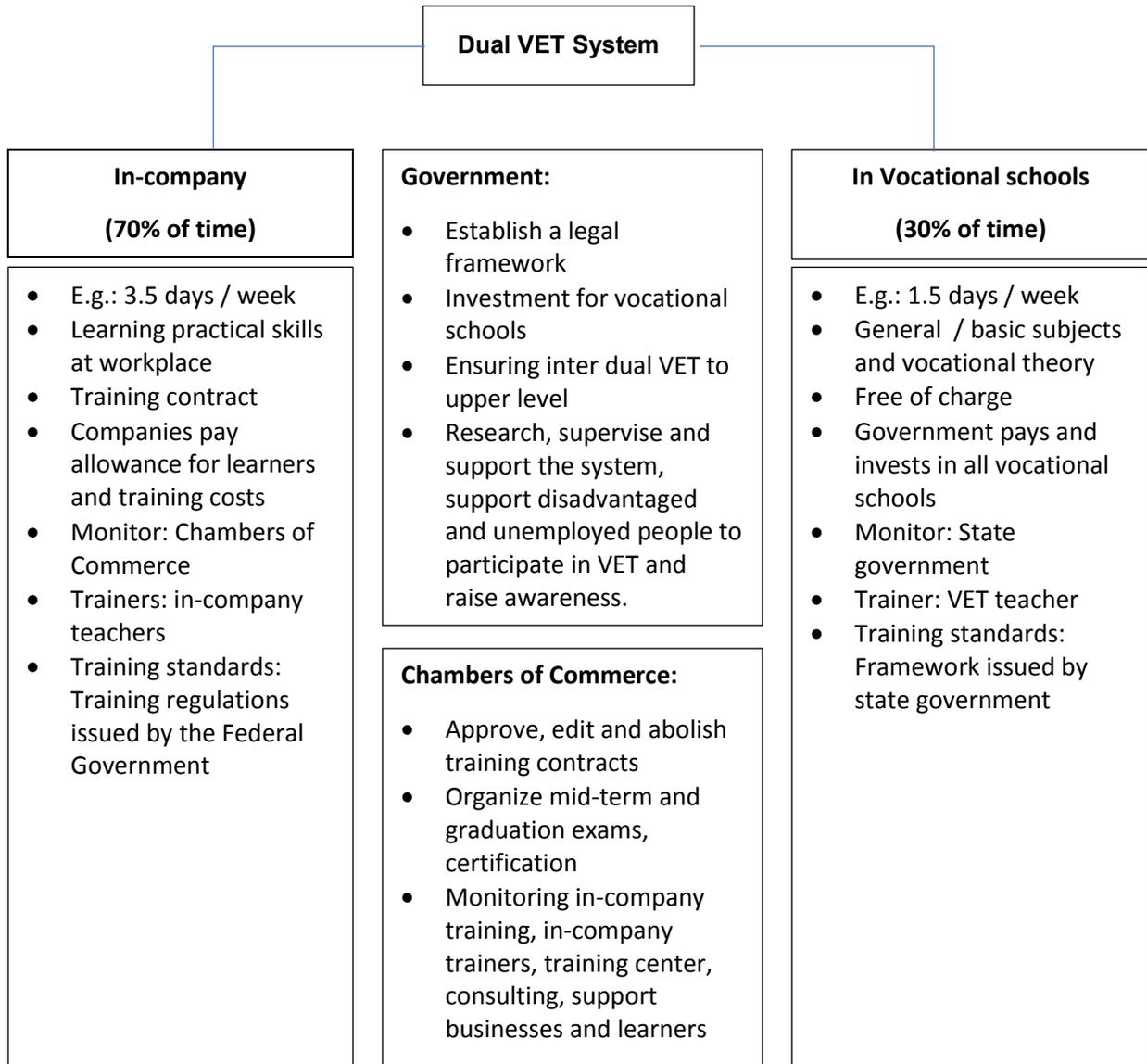
Dual VET lasts from 2 to 3.5 years depending on the occupational field and the training level in the national qualification framework. Germany's national qualification framework (issued in 2013) provides 8 qualification levels, ensuring reference with 8 levels in the European qualification framework, in which vocational training levels include level 3, level 4 and level 6. Dual VET graduates are placed at level 3 or level 4 depending on the registered training course (level 3 with a 2-year training period, level 4 with a training period of 3-3.5 years)

To graduate, students must pass the nationwide standardised test. Theoretical and practical contents in the graduation exams in all 16 states follow the same standard. Particularly the theoretical exam is held jointly, at the same time nationwide. Thus, although the training content at vocational schools may not be exactly the same due to provisions of different state governments, the graduation exam must be consistent nationwide, and diplomas granted are following the national qualification framework.

The graduation exam is organised by the Chamber of Commerce. They are responsible for selecting those qualified to join the examination board, composed of representatives of employers, employees (nominated by the Sector Association) and vocational school teachers (managed by each State Government). Members of the board must be present on the examination and assessment days. They are also responsible for recording the procedures of the examination inspection and recording process and certificates for the graduates.

Graduates from dual VET courses, who want to study to an upper level, equivalent to level 6 of the national qualification framework, have 2 options: (i) study vocational bachelor courses (master craftsman) by the Department trade manager (this degree is a compulsory qualification to teach in a company or to own a business) or (ii) transfer to an academic university.

**Summary diagram of German dual VET system:**



Obviously, because of a different historical context and conditions between countries, it is impossible to copy exactly the German dual VET system to another country. However, studying the German dual VET model will suggest many lessons for countries that can refer to policy making as well as practical implementation to improve the quality of TVET and meet the requirements of the labor market.